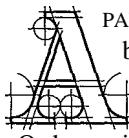


# *Kabbalah and Freemasonry*

*W. Kirk MacNulty, 32<sup>o</sup>*

## KABBALAH IN MASONIC HISTORY



PAPER WHICH UNDERTAKES TO DEMONSTRATE AN INFLUENCE OF KABBALAH on Freemasonry, particularly one presented to a non-Masonic audience, should certainly start with some information about the nature and history of the Masonic Order. A definition of the Order as it exists today is relatively easy: Freemasonry is a secular fraternal organization, open only to men, which promulgates the principles of morality and seeks to advance the practice of brotherly love and charitable action among all persons—not simply among Masons. It is not a religion; but it is a society of religious men in that as it requires its members to believe in the existence of "a Supreme Being." The name of that Being and the form in which It is to be worshipped is entirely the business of the individual Mason. Masons are obligated on the "Volume of Sacred Law," and each Mason takes his obligation on that particular volume of sacred writings which he holds to be sacred. While encouraging each Brother to follow the teachings of his own religion, Freemasonry is not concerned with the details of those religions; and sectarian religious discussion is forbidden at Masonic gatherings. While not a religion, the Order might be considered to be a "philosophical companion to religion." To my way of thinking that very idea is implicit in this definition, taken from the First Lecture: Masonry is "A peculiar system of morality, veiled in allegory and

illustrated by symbols."<sup>1</sup> As might be expected of a society of religious men, the moral and philosophical principles communicated by these symbols are considered to have been derived from the Divine source.

Historical information about Freemasonry's origin is much more difficult to provide than a definition. As one historian of thought, Francis A. Yates, has put it, "The origin of Freemasonry is one of the most debated, and debatable, subjects in the whole realm of historical enquiry."<sup>2</sup> Some of the Masonic histories written in the 19th century were quite fanciful and uncritical in their approach. More recent authors have sought to be more rigorous, but the data which is available present a real and ongoing puzzle. Citing Yates again, "... recent books on the subject have been moving in the direction of exact historical investigation, but the writers of such books have to leave as an unsolved question the problem of the origin of "speculative" masonry, with its symbolic use of columns, arches, and other architectural features, and of geometrical symbolism, as the framework within which it presents a moral teaching and a mystical outlook towards the divine architect of the universe."<sup>3</sup>

At the present time there is no real agreement, even among Masons, about the origins of the Order. Some Masons, those who are romantically inclined, like to think that they have participated in the very rituals which were used by King Solomon to instruct the workmen at the building of his Temple. This is certainly an unrealistic view.<sup>4</sup> Without doubt, there are plenty of operative masons (stonecutters) to be found in European history, but there is no evidence of a group of philosophically inclined men who transmit a Masonic tradition from Biblical times to England in the late renaissance. Others Masons, at the opposite pole of opinion, consider that Masonry started as nothing more than a gentleman's club, one of the myriad clubs that sprang up in London in the early part of the 18th century. If that be true, it was a very unusual club, indeed. Unlike the other clubs of the period, very shortly after its initial organization in 1717 it grew explosively, not simply in England but also in Scotland, Ireland, France, the Low Countries and Germany. In addition Masonry acquired, somehow, Royal Patronage, a profoundly philosophical orientation, and a very elaborate system of symbolism. In arguing that Masonry is simply "a club" one should explain why *this* particular club developed as it did. One of the obvious explanations for its rapid growth is that Masonry was teaching and practicing something that was, at the time, of very widespread interest to the intellectual community. The Hermetic/Kabbalistic Tradition of the Renaissance is certainly such a thing; and, as we shall see, it would account for Masonry's unique symbolic structure and for many of its rituals and practices.

In my own view, Freemasonry is a codification of the Hermetic/Kabbalistic Tradition which formed the intellectual essence of renaissance thought;<sup>5</sup> and

the material presented here will reflect that view. We will start with a very brief overview of what is known of Masonic history, and during this overview we will cite those historical references which mention Kabbalah specifically. In the interest of keeping to a reasonable space we will acknowledge an early and important Scottish influence, but confine ourselves to English material in this presentation. After we have acquired this background, we will consider how the symbolic structure of Freemasonry reflects the teachings of Kabbalah.

The diagram in Figure 1 presents a very general overview of the development of English Freemasonry. "Events" involving reference to Kabbalah are shown as asterisks, and will be discussed below. The parts in blue represent the Grand Lodge(s), and the dotted portions at the left of the drawing are intended to indicate how very uncertain our information about their origins really is. Even with respect to the period after the formal organization of the Premier Grand Lodge in 1717, there are large areas about which only a little is known. For example, in the area of ritual and symbol—what Masons actually did at their meetings—we must rely almost entirely on exposures for the period from 1717 until the last quarter of the 18th century. We do know a little. There certainly was "Masonic activity" in England in the middle of the 17th century. The first speculative Masons that we can identify positively are Sir Robert Moray and Elias Ashmole. They were initiated into the Order in 1641 and 1646 respectively, both in the north of England. Both were closely involved with the Hermetic/ Kabbalistic Tradition: Ashmole was a significant contributor to the literature of that Tradition, and Moray was the patron of the alchemist, Thomas Vaughan.<sup>6</sup>

In *Theatrum Chemicum Britannicum* Ashmole makes a point which it will be useful for us to note at the outset. He writes, "And therefore is it not less absurd, then strange, to see how some Men ... will not forbear to ranke *True Magicians* with *Conjurers, Necromancers* and *Witches* (those grand Impostors) who violently intrude themselves into Magick, as *if Swine should enter into a faire and delicate Garden....*"<sup>7</sup> This distinction between "True Magicians," whom Ashmole considers to be practitioners of the mystical ascent in the Hermetic/ Kabbalistic Tradition, and "Conjurers, Necromancers, and Witches," who attempt to use "Magick" to influence the physical world is a significant one. For Ashmole, "Magick" aspires to a transformation of the individual; it requires the individual to surrender his will to the will of God; and it is part of the mystical ascent. Conjuring and witchcraft aspire to produce result in the physical world upon which the individual seeks to impose his own will.<sup>8</sup> This distinction has been made by the contemporary scholar, Donald Tyson, in his analysis of speculative and practical Kabbalah presented with his annotation of Agrippa's *De Occulta Philosophia*.<sup>9</sup> We will see shortly how this issue may have influenced the early development of Freemasonry.

# Development of English Freemasonry

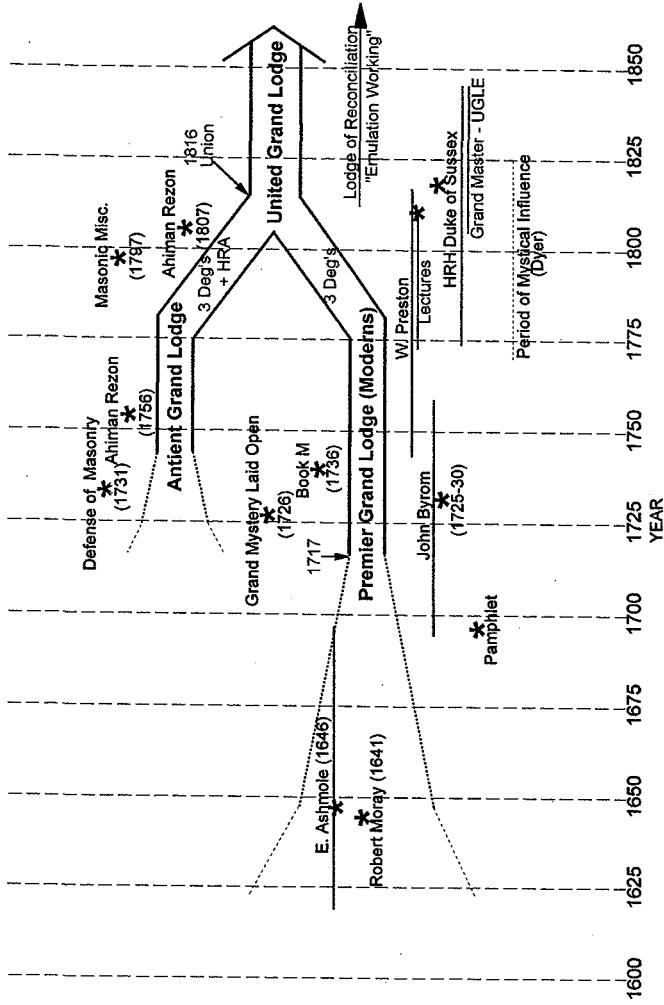


Figure 1.

Another piece of evidence which demonstrates the existence (and perhaps sheds light on the intellectual orientation) of Masonry in the late 17th century is the bit of ephemera shown in Figure 2. This pamphlet, which was distributed in 1698, warns "All Godly People in the Citie of London" to beware the "Mischiefs and Evils practiced" by "this devilish Sect of Men," the Freemasons. We can establish two facts from this pamphlet: (1) that Freemasonry existed at that time in some form; and (2) that some people, the author of the pamphlet at least, believed that Masons were involved in some sort of mystical activity. Apparently, in author's view they were acting in the role of "Conjurers, Necromancers, and Witches" (to borrow Ashmole's words). Of course, simply from this pamphlet, we cannot know what transpired in the meetings of these late 17th century Masons; but it is not unreasonable to think that they might have been doing something related to the Hermetic/Kabbalistic tradition in order to earn the suspicion of the pamphlet's author. This pamphlet assures us that in the late 17th century there was a popular awareness of Masons and a perception that they had mystical involvements.

Beyond concluding that Masons were present in London in 1698, we can derive from this pamphlet some tentative ideas about their frame of mind. It was to be almost twenty years before these men made their meetings a matter of public knowledge and formed themselves into the Premier Grand Lodge. At the end of the 17th century, their activities were causing them to be associated with evil-doing and with witchcraft; and presumably, given the punishments imposed on witches at that time, that was an association they would wish to avoid. Is it possible that we see in this situation the reason why Freemasonry has, from its very beginnings, excluded women?

In the late 17th and early 18th centuries Witch's Covens in England were androgynous. "The English [witch] Craft was ostensibly bi-gradal until the end of the seventeenth century. Two Rites were observed but only one actual initiation was recognized. The First Rite entailed ritual copulation with a representative of the God. The Magister "brought in" female recruits. The Lady brought in male recruits. This is the historical basis for the claim that a candidate must be initiated by a person of the opposite sex. The Magister passed the "power" to women. The Lady passed it to men. This sexual induction at the entrance rite was mandatory."<sup>10</sup> It seems to me entirely reasonable to think that Masons, seeking to rebut accusations of witchcraft, had excluded women from their proceedings simply to be able to say, "Look, see! We cannot possibly be involved in that; because we allow no women at our proceedings!"; and that they formalized this practice, for the same reason, when they founded the Premier Grand Lodge. The allegations contained in the Broadsheet shown in Figure 2 gives support to this idea.

TO ALL GODLY PEOPLE,  
in the Citie of  
LONDON.

**H**aving thought it needful to warn you of the Mischiefs and Evils practised in the Sight of GOD by those called Freed Masons, I say take Care lest their Ceremonies and secret Swearings take hold of you; and be wary that none cause you to err from Godliness. For this devillish Sect of Men are Meeters in secret which swear against all without their Following. They are the Anti Christ which was to come leading Men from Fear of GOD. For how should Men meet in secret Places and with secret Signs taking Care that none observe them to do the Work of GOD; are not these the Ways of Evil-doers?

Knowing how that GOD observeth privily them that in Darkness they shall be smitten and the Secrets of their Hearts layed bare. Mingle not among this corrupt People lest you be found so at the World's Conflagration.

---

Set forth as a Warning to this Christian Generation by  
M. Winter, and Printed by R. Sare at Gray's  
Inn-gate, in Holborn.

1698.

Frances Lurfo

Figure 2. From the original in the Library of the United Grand Lodge of England.

On St. John the Evangelist's Day in 1717 four Masonic Lodges which are said to have been meeting "from time immemorial," met at the Goose and Gridiron Ale-House in Covent Garden and constituted themselves a Grand Lodge. This action brought into being the first public and formally acknowledged organization of Freemasons. Five years later, in 1723, Dr. James Anderson, a Presbyterian Minister, published a *Book of Constitutions*. In the preparation of his Constitutions, Anderson is said to have consulted the opinions of "... the late and present Deputy Grand Masters and other learned Brethren ..."; and it was published "with a certain measure of Grand Lodge authority."<sup>11</sup> Anderson's *Constitutions* is, in many ways, a reflection of his personal views. It contains a romantic history of Freemasonry which traces the Masonic tradition right back to Adam. In other aspects it publishes many useful and previously existing regulations such as those prohibiting the discussion of politics and sectarian religious discussion. It also sets out Masonry's requirement for the belief in a supreme being.

As we consider the period in which Anderson's Constitutions were published the name of John Byrom requires our attention. Byrom was a Fellow of the Royal Society, and he is known for his collection of curious geometric drawings. This remarkable collection has been analyzed thoroughly by Joy Hancox in her excellent book, *The Byrom Collection*, a work which provides much useful information about the thinking of the English intellectual community in the early 18th century. John Byrom was a Freemason, and he numbered among his friends such prominent Masons as William Stukeley, Sir Hans Sloane, Martin Folkes, and John Theophilus Desaguliers, the third Grand Master of the Premier Grand Lodge. The thing about Byrom of particular interest to us is that from 1725 he ran a "Cabala Club" whose members included many of his friends; Sir Hans Sloane was certainly a member.<sup>12</sup> Opponents of the view I am presenting here will argue that the simple fact that Byrom, Sloane and others were interested in Kabbalah does not mean that they necessarily indulged that interest at their Masonic Lodges. Nonetheless, the idea is attractive, particularly in the context of other information. Let us look at some of the publications of the period.

As we have seen, among the most important sources of information about Freemasonry in the early 18th century are exposures which were published periodically in response to the popular demand for information about the Order. One such broadsheet, *The Grand Mystery Laid Open*, was published anonymously in 1726; and it contains the following text: "How many Signs has a true Freemason, Nine, which are distinguish'd into Spiritual and Temporal.... Have the six Spiritual Signs any names? Yes, but are not divulged to any new admitted member, because they are Cabalistical?" And later, with respect to the secret word, "... What is it? It is a Cabalistical Word...",<sup>13</sup> One must be careful

to avoid jumping to conclusions on the basis of material which is published as an anonymous exposé, because one can never know the motive of the author. Still, there is no evidence that the author of this paper was hostile to Masonry or seeking to deceive; and taken with the other evidence, such as Byrom's "Cabala Club," it is thought provoking to say the least.

A similar anonymous publication appeared in Newcastle upon Tyne in 1736. It was called The Book M, and no literate person of the period could have failed to make the connection with the document of the same name that was alleged to have been found in the Rosicrucian Vault.<sup>14</sup> The Book M is not an exposé. It appears to be more of a memorial written by a Brother who seems to have been very proud of his Masonic connections and very moved by his association with the Order. Among other things, it contains a romantic history which suggests that Masonry had its origins in antiquity, and among the various mystical disciplines that it cites as sources of Masonry is "... the *Caballa* of the Jews...."<sup>15</sup>

In 1730 a Mason named Samuel Prichard published a very hostile, 32 page pamphlet entitled *Masonry Dissected*. He had apparently joined the Order seeking some personal advantage, and he had been disappointed. As he put it, "Of all the Impositions that have appeared amongst Mankind, none are so ridiculous as the Mystery of Masonry ....," and he hoped that his publication would "... have its desired Effect in preventing so many credulous Persons being drawn into so pernicious a Society"<sup>16</sup> For the benefit of the credulous, he sets out all the rituals in which he participated when he became a Mason. In a sense we are indebted to Prichard. In the period around 1717 the Premier Grand Lodge seems to have been working a system of two Degrees. Through his exposé we have learned that by 1730 the Premier Grand Lodge was using a ritual of three Degrees.<sup>17</sup> Masons of the period did not feel this indebtedness. They were made very indignant by Prichard's revelations; and there were a number of rejoinders to his publication. One of these, *A Defense of Masonry*,<sup>TM</sup> published in 1730-31, describes the Order as an heir to (if not the historical descendant of) the wisdom of antiquity and lists "Cabala" as one of those sources. This Defense of Masonry received a certain amount of "official recognition." It appeared in the 1738 edition of Anderson's Constitutions, which suggests support within Masonry for its content.

During the early and middle 18th century English Masonry produced very little graphical material. In France, however, the Order was growing almost as quickly as it was in England; and there were numerous French exposures. We must not spend a great deal of time considering French Masonry, but it has had some influence on the English Order, and some of the exposures contain interesting pictures. Figure 3 is from *La Desolation des Entrepreneurs Modernes*, an exposé by Louis Travenol published in 1747.<sup>19</sup> It is the first of several

Plan de la Loge de  
l'Apprenti Compagnon

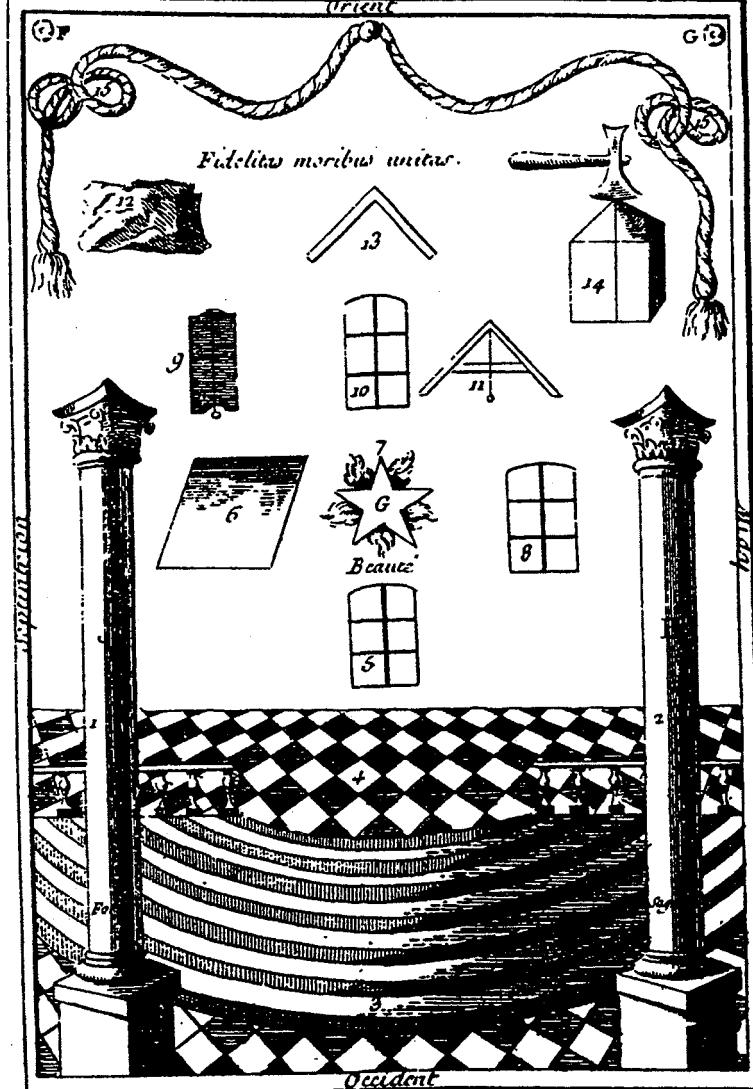


Figure 3. Plan of the Apprentice Fellow's Lodge from *La Desolation des Entrepreneurs Modernes*, by Louis Travenol, 1747

Masonic diagrams that we will consider in some detail. For the moment, I would like to suggest that this is not simply an architectural picture. Rather it is fundamentally a Kabbalistic diagram. Why? Because in spite of what seems to be an ordinary structure, this is a picture of a staircase between two pillars which have opposite characteristics (as indicated by the annotations on each). Note also that the staircase has seven steps. A basic knowledge of the Tree of Life will bring to mind immediately the Kabbalistic allusions implicit in such an arrangement.

Referring again to Figure 1, we can see that in the 1740s a second Masonic body called the "Antient Grand Lodge" was beginning to form in London. As is the case with the Premier Grand Lodge, we know very little of the origin of the Antients. The most generally accepted theory is that the Antient Grand Lodge was formed by Irish immigrant Masons who "... had been made in lodges in Ireland but had been refused entry to London lodges either on grounds of their class or because their ritual did not conform with changes that had been made in England in the late 1730s"<sup>20</sup> The Antient Grand Lodge, under the guidance of Laurence Dermott, its very able and energetic Grand Secretary, grew quickly; and very soon it had become a serious competitor to the Premier Grand Lodge. There was intense rivalry between the two organizations, a rivalry that was exacerbated by the Antients' claim that the Premier Grand Lodge had departed from the Ancient Landmarks of Masonry which the Antients claimed to be following. A very confusing nomenclature arose from this allegation: The self-styled Antient Grand Lodge was called "the Antients"; and the Premier Grand Lodge, in fact many years older, became known as "the Moderns" because of their supposed innovations.

Although there are many theories, we do not know exactly what the nature of those alleged innovations were. We do know some of the differences between the two bodies, and the Premier Grand Lodge does seem to have been using a much simplified ritual during the mid-18th century. Of specific interest to us is the fact that while the both Grand Lodges practiced a ritual which conferred three Degrees, the Antient Grand Lodge also conferred a fourth Degree, the Holy Royal Arch. The Premier Grand Lodge refused to recognize that Degree, saying, "This Grand Lodge ... has nothing to do with the Proceedings of the Society of Royal Arch Masons";<sup>21</sup> while "... the Antients ... regarded [it] as the real kernel of their masonry"<sup>22</sup> It is generally acknowledged, even by Masons who do not admit a mystical orientation of the first three Degrees, that the Royal Arch contains mystical material. Later we will consider some of the writings of Laurence Dermott, as well as the Masonic symbolic structure and the role which is played by this "Fourth Degree." We may feel that the Antients may have been accusing the Moderns of having forgotten their mystical heritage.

Through the last few decades of the 18th century the rituals and symbolic structure used by both Grand Lodges continued to evolve. Perhaps no single Mason had more influence on that evolution than did William Preston. Preston was initiated into Freemasonry in 1763 in a Lodge working under the Antient Grand Lodge. Very shortly thereafter he joined a Lodge working under the Premier Grand Lodge. By 1768 he was the Master of Philanthropic Lodge, and the records indicate that he was a member of several Lodges under the latter constitution. One of Preston's chief interests seems to have been the development of "Lectures," catechisms to be recited in Lodge for the purpose of instructing Brethren in the teachings of the Order. These were introduced to the Masons of the day at "... a grand Gala at the Crown and Anchor Tavern in the Strand, on Thursday, May 21, 1772."<sup>23</sup> Preston had a long, varied, and very distinguished Masonic career; during which he continued to develop his Lectures; the last versions were published in the period 1806-12. His early Lectures seem simply to teach moral principles. The later Lectures exhibit a quality which is directly relevant to our subject: "... a series of discussions upon factual matters which become more and more technical, abstract, and mystical. It is based on a metaphysical notion of King Solomon's Temple, which is looked upon as a sort of Masonic University, with excursions into Platonic Theory and Cabalism."<sup>24</sup> In *William Preston and His Work* Colin Dyer offers this description of Preston's personality: "He was by nature impetuous ... he was proud and stubborn, especially in matters involving what he considered as principle; these characteristics made him a controversial figure in the Freemasonry of his times. In later years he inclined towards mysticism."<sup>25</sup>

Certainly, Preston was a man who marched to the beat of his own drum and worked to advance his own programs. We do know that in later editions of his Lectures he cites Kabbalah as one of the sources of Masonic teaching. Whether his mystical interests were a characteristic of his later years, or whether he had indulged them for a long time, presented them "clothed in the symbolism" of his Lectures, and simply began to speak of them openly as he grew older and felt he had less to lose, is something we cannot know with certainty. From reading his Lectures, I am inclined to think that he had been following mystical teachings for a considerable part of his life. What is quite certain is that much of Freemasonry as we know it today finds its source in Preston's work.

There is a good deal of Masonic pictorial material available in the last decade of the 18th century. Figure 4, the frontispiece from a work called *Masonic Miscellanies* is typical; and it is of interest. Like many Masonic diagrams of the period, this seems to be a heterogeneous collection of symbols, but two seem to me to be essentially Kabbalistic. Once again we see the staircase (ladder) of seven steps between two opposite verticals, and these are clearly opposite—they

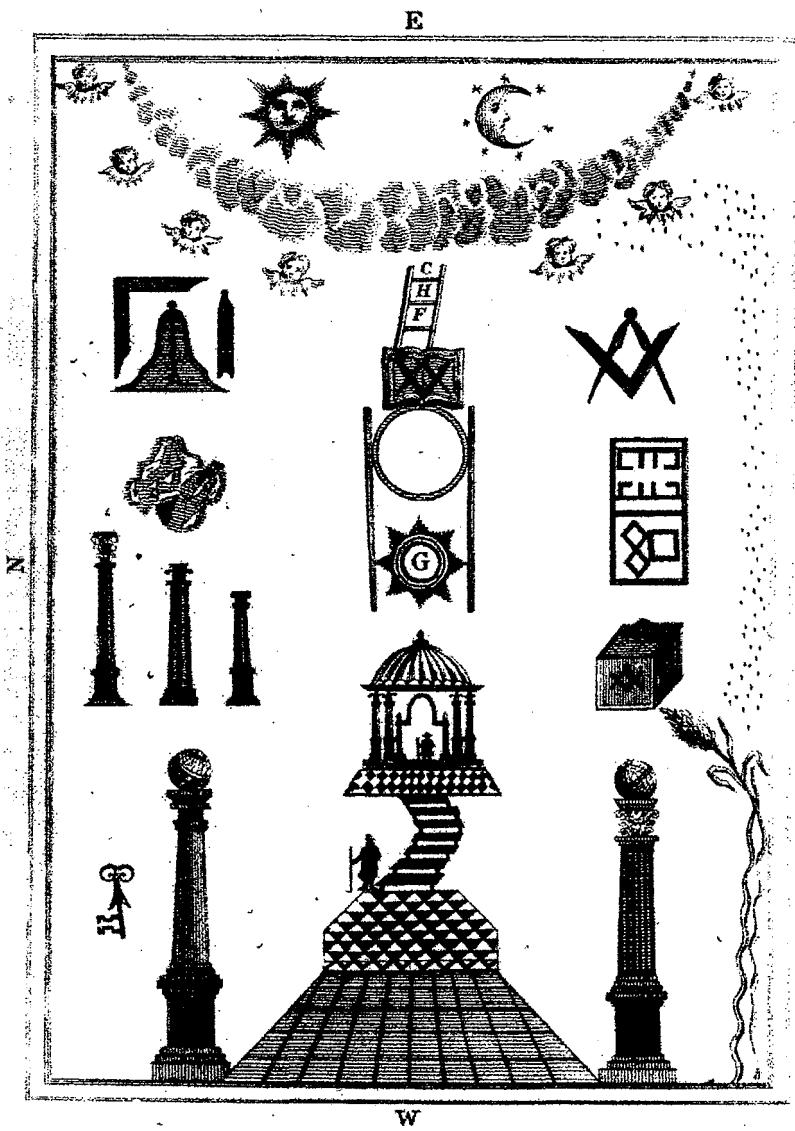


Figure 4. Frontispiece, *Masonic Miscellanies*, 1797.

are of different orders of architecture and they are surmounted by terrestrial and celestial spheres. The same pattern is repeated at the top of the drawing by the symbol of the Circle, the Parallel Lines and the Ladder (Jacob's Ladder) which has three principal rounds, Faith, Hope, and Charity. In 1797, when this drawing was published, those Parallel Lines represented the Saints John. We know them to be opposites because the Baptist's Day is mid-summer and the Evangelist's mid-winter. Today, after the de-Christianization of the Order, they are said to represent Moses (the prophet) and Solomon (the lawgiver);<sup>26</sup> once again, opposites. We will see this arrangement again.

The rivalry between the Premier (Modern) and the Antient Grand Lodges continued throughout latter half of the 18th century, and at times it became quite intense. Toward the end of the century, however, there was a general recognition among the members of both Grand Lodges that the two bodies had, in principle, similar objectives, and that they would do well to bury their rivalry and seek unification. In the first decade of 1800s there were desultory efforts at negotiations with that idea in mind. The unification was achieved by the influence of two Royal Dukes who were blood brothers as well as Masonic Brethren.

In 1813 HRH the Duke of Sussex became the Grand Master of the Premier Grand Lodge, and in the same year HRH the Duke of Kent acceded to the same position in the Antient Grand Lodge. Shortly thereafter discussions about unification began, and in six weeks the two Grand Lodges had agreed to the Articles of Union. The United Grand Lodge of England came into existence on St. John the Evangelist's Day, December 27, 1813. The Duke of Kent graciously stepped aside to permit his brother, the Duke of Sussex, to become Grand Master of the new Grand Lodge. It was a good choice. Sussex was energetic, intelligent, and deeply committed to Masonry; after "personally directing the reorganization of the Grand Lodge"<sup>27</sup> he guided the Craft with a firm hand until 1843.

Heretofore, the references to Kabbalah have been peripheral. Although Kabbalah has been in the background, there is no evidence that any of the Masons we have mentioned (except, perhaps, Byrom) were serious students of the subject. Now the situation is different. The Duke of Sussex was an unusual person. Severely asthmatic in his youth, he was prevented from following the military career usually pursued by younger sons of the Royal Family. As a child, he had been raised in Germany where the climate was thought to be more suitable for his delicate health. While there, he had received an excellent education; and he was known to be deeply religious. He was also a scholar with a very deep interest in Judaism. In fact, he was a real Judeophile; and he spoke, read and wrote Hebrew. By the time he became Grand Master he had accumulated a significant library which included a collection of original Hebrew manuscripts. These were forty-four in number; and at least eleven were classical Kabbalistic

works. Figures 5 through 7 show the *Index to the Manuscripts*<sup>2\*</sup> from the catalogue prepared by Thomas J. Pettigrew, Sussex's librarian. The Kabbalistic manuscripts have been indicated.

One of the first actions of the new Grand Master was to establish the Lodge of Reconciliation, composed of Brethren from both of the original Grand Lodges. The task of that new Lodge was to formulate a new ritual for use by the United Grand Lodge. Sussex, himself, was not a member of the Lodge of Reconciliation; and we do not know how much personal influence he exercised over its activities. It seems to me reasonable to think that his influence must have been considerable, given the importance attached to the subject by the Masons of the day. We do know that his trusted assistant, Jose H. daCosta, was closely associated with the members of Reconciliation. Unfortunately, the Lodge of Reconciliation, while it reported its conclusions in 1816, did not publish records of its deliberations. Thus, while significant changes were introduced into the practices of the 18th century, the reasons for their introduction remain unknown. We can deduce two principles that seemed to have been used as guides: that there should be seven Officers in a Lodge (not including the Secretary and Treasurer); and that there should be three Working Tools associated with each Degree. The application of these principles in the development of the new ritual caused some Masons to experience a significant change from their traditional methods. We shall see the Kabbalistic implications of these principles shortly.

The ritual and symbolic structure developed by the Lodge of Reconciliation was presented to the members of the United Grand Lodge in a series of demonstrations starting in 1816. It was not written down. For a variety of reasons having to do with nature of teaching by demonstration and the difficulties of transportation at the time, the new ritual was adopted only very slowly. As a result, there are in England today several different "workings" or variations of the ritual. All of the workings have the basic principles and symbolic structure in common, and all have Three Degrees. That was one of the significant provisions in the Articles of Union; it was agreed that Masonry consisted of the three Degrees, including the Holy Royal Arch. In the English Workings the Royal Arch, since it is conferred separately, might appear to be "... a fourth Degree in Freemasonry, such, however, is not the case. It is the Master Mason's completed.... "<sup>29</sup> At this point it would be useful to be able to demonstrate some definite Kabbalistic influence on the Lodge of Reconciliation, but no direct evidence of this sort has been discovered. There are, however, some suggestive ideas to be found in the writings of the Antient Grand Lodge.

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Figure 6. *Index to the Manuscripts* in the Duke of Sussex's library.

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40.	— Elidad Hadoni on Religion. Sæc. xvii. Octavo . . . .	ib.
41.	A Treatise on Arithmetic. Sæc. xvii. Octavo . . . .	ib.
42.	Abraham Cordosa, The Book Bekir Abraham. Sæc. xviii. Octavo . . . .	ib.
43.	Maimonides. Errata in the Yod Hachazakah of, and the Comments of Kazeph Mishna. Sæc. xviii. Octavo . . . .	ib.
44.	The Book Shelosha Saregim. Sæc. xviii. Octavo . . . .	xxxv
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## Papyracteries.

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## Greek Manuscripts.

1.	Psalterium Graece. Sæc. xv. vel xvi. Duodecimo . . . .	xli
2.	Novum Testamentum Gr. Sæc. xiii. Octavo . . . .	xlii
3.	Theophylacti (Arch. Bulg.) in Evang. Joannis enarratio. Sæc. xvi. Folio . . . .	xlv
4.	Chrysostomi (Sancti Johannis) Homiliae. Sæc. xiv. Folio . . . .	xlvii
5.	Germani (S.) Homilia de Annunciatione Gr. et Lat. Sæc. xvii. Folio . . . .	xlii
6.	Naucratii Epistola. S. Germani Synodicon. Sæc. xvi. vel xvii. Folio . . . .	lii
7.	Eusebii (Episc. Cæsar.) contra Marcellum Ancyranum. Sæc. xvi. Folio . . . .	ib.
8.	Theodori Studite Opera quædam, diversa manu descripta. Sæc. xvi. Folio . . . .	liii
9.	Miscellanea ad Theologiam et Ecclesiasticam Historiam pertinentia. Sæc. xviii. Folio . . . .	liv
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Figure 7. *Index to the Manuscripts* in the Duke of Sussex's library.

## AHIMAN REZON

When we spoke of the Antient Grand Lodge we mentioned its claim that the Premier Grand Lodge had departed from the Antient Landmarks of Freemasonry. We also noted that the specific nature of this alleged departure is unknown. The views of the Antients were expressed in an historical essay which formed part of the introduction to the book, *Ahiman Rezon*, the Book of Constitutions of the Antient Grand Lodge, written by Laurence Dermott, the first Grand Secretary of the Antients, and published first in 1756. We might expect a work which contributed to the bitter, sixty year rivalry between the Grand Lodges to have been critical of the Premier Grand Lodge; and indeed, it was. The essay is written in a difficult style, and its character changes in many respects as the book passes through several editions. It is of interest to us at this stage in our investigation because the essay and its changes gives a clue into the thinking of the Antient Grand Lodge. I believe the Antients' claim was that the Premier Grand Lodge had departed from the original intent of Freemasonry by forgetting its mystical roots and that the Antient Grand Lodge was trying to retain that mystical orientation. That would certainly fit with the latter organization's interest in the Holy Royal Arch. Let us see what Dermott had to say.

Dermott starts his essay with a paragraph commenting on the usual Masonic text "... wherein they give us an account of the drawing, scheming, planning, designing, erecting, and building of temples, towers, cities, castles, palaces, theaters, pyramids, monuments, bridges, walls, pillars, courts, halls, fortifications, and labyrinths, with the famous light-house of Pharos and Colossus at Rhodes, and many other wonderful works performed by the ARCHITECTS, to the great satisfaction of the readers and edification of free-masons." The paragraph includes a footnote which "Quere(s), Whether such histories are of any use in the secret mysteries of the craft."<sup>30</sup> In suggesting that discussions about the building of physical structures do not relate to the real business of Free-Masonry, Dermott introduces a distinction between the "mysteries of the craft" and operative masonry.

After a long digression which denigrates authors of Masonic exposures, Dermott returns to the subject of Masonry:

Certain it is ... that free-masonry has been from the creation (though not under that name); that it was a divine gift from God; that Cain and the builders of his city were strangers to the secret mystery of masonry; that there were but four Masons in the world when the deluge happened, that one of the four, even the second son of Noah, was not master of the art; that neither Nimrod, nor any of his bricklayers, knew any thing of the matter, and that there were but very few masters of the art (even) at Solomon's

temple; whereby it plainly appears, that the whole mystery was communicated to very few at that time; that at Solomon's temple (and not before) it received the name free-masonry, because the masons at Jerusalem and Tyre were the greatest cabalists then in the world; that the mystery has been, for the most part, practised amongst builders since Solomon's time....

This paragraph also includes a footnote which defines "cabalists" as "People skilled in the cabala i.e. tradition, their secret science of expounding divine mysteries, &c."<sup>31</sup>

Writing some fifty years later, in 1807 shortly before the Union of the Grand Lodges, Thomas Harper, then the Deputy Grand Master of the Antients, published the Seventh Edition of *Ahiman Rezon*. The title page proclaimed it to be "Revised and Corrected." The Introduction had been rewritten and derogatory material had been removed, but the two sections cited above (including the reference to "cabalists") appear virtually unchanged in the 1807 edition.

In his version of the introductory essay Harper, following Dermott's example, makes a distinction between what he calls "the Royal Art" and operative masonry. Harper's introduction starts with Adam and "the Fall," and to that event it traces "... the origin of the sciences. First arose Divinity, whereby was pointed out to fallen man, the ways and will of God, the omnipotence and mercy of an offended Creator; then Law, as directing us to distribute justice to our neighbour, and relieve those who are oppressed or suffer wrong. The Royal Art was beyond all doubt coeval with the above sciences...,"<sup>32</sup> We should note the parallel between this statement and the traditional Kabbalistic teaching which says that immediately after "the Fall" the Lord sent the Archangel Raziel (whose name means "the Secrets of God") to teach Adam the ways by which his lost status could be regained.

Harper goes on to say that the "Royal Art" was transmitted from Adam through Methuselah to Noah (and so on) who preserved it "... with a veneration and prudence suitable to its great importance...."<sup>33</sup> Then he goes on to say that mankind "... adhered to the lessons of nature (...," and by doing so man learned the secrets of "... creating habitations and cultivating the ground," and finally "... by degrees to form the sciences of Geometry and Architecture...."<sup>34</sup> It is significant that the "Royal Art" is said to have had a Divine source, while the source of skill in "creating habitations" and of "the sciences Geometry and Architecture" is seen as the study of nature.

We can sum up this interpretation of these essays which introduce the Antients' Constitutions thus: There are two disciplines in Freemasonry: the "Royal Art," or "the mystery"; and the builder's craft. The former was taught to Adam by the Deity immediately after the Fall in order to enable mankind to

regain the edenic state in which he was conscious of the Divine Presence, and this is the essence of Masonic teaching. The latter, which has to do with the making of physical structures and was learned from man's study of nature, is peripheral to the central Masonic teaching. Initially these two disciplines were quite separate. The builders at Cain's City of Enoch and at Nimrod's Tower of Babel are said not to have been practitioners of the "Royal Art." As a result of the teachings of the "cabalists" at Solomon's Temple, builders have been practicing the "Royal Art" under the name of "Free-Masonry" ever since. This analysis certainly suggests that among the members of the Antient Grand Lodge there was a mystical, and probably a Kabbalistic, understanding of Freemasonry.

This is an unusual interpretation of Dermott's introductory essay to *Ahiman Rezon*; but it is not, I think, an unreasonable one. In fact, it seems entirely reasonable when we recall that the members of the Antient Grand Lodge conferred the Holy Royal Arch, a Degree acknowledged to be mystical in its content. To me, this reading of *Ahiman Rezon* indicates a very definite frame of mind within the Antient Grand Lodge, a frame of mind which was held at the time of the Union. If that frame of mind were brought to the Lodge of Reconciliation by the representatives of the Antients, there to be combined with an interest in Kabbalah engendered among the representatives of the Premier Grand Lodge by the Duke of Sussex, then there was a real Kabbalistic influence on the deliberations of that body. Such an influence would explain the correspondences we shall observe in the following paragraphs.

To summarize this historical overview, we should note: After the initial organization of the Premier Grand Lodge in 1717 Masonic ritual and symbolic structure was devised very quickly. Its basic form—the three degrees of the sort we shall consider in a moment—was in place by 1730, perhaps as early as 1723. Thereafter, the ritual and its associated symbols evolved within that framework throughout the 18th century, and it stabilized after the work of the Lodge of Reconciliation. It is my hypotheses that the basic form was devised for a definite purpose, and that the evolution occurred toward a definite goal. Specifically, in the Masonic ritual as devised in the 1720s we find the initial attempt to represent the mystical ascent, the objective of the renaissance philosophers, in the form of a ritual drama. After almost a century of evolution, the Masonic ritual devised by the Lodge of Reconciliation is a much refined and polished version of that original attempt. I will suggest that it is formulated in Kabbalistic terms. Although there were no written records of the Lodge of Reconciliation, it is generally agreed that what is known today as the "Emulation Working" preserves the conclusions of that Lodge probably as well as any of the several rituals that are in current use. It is that Masonic working that we will consider in a Kabbalistic context.

I propose to relate Freemasonry to Kabbalah by relating the various Masonic symbols to the Tree of Life. However, before writing openly about Masonic symbols it seems appropriate to say a little bit on the subject of one of the commonly held views about Freemasonry.

It is commonly held that Masons are compulsively secretive about things Masonic. In view of that widely held belief, it may seem strange that a Mason should write about Masonic symbolism in a publication for public consumption. In fact, there is very little about Freemasonry that is secret.<sup>35</sup> Almost all of the Masonic symbolism has been the subject of an extensive literature, most usually by Masonic authors who are highly regarded within the Order. The only "official secrets" are the means by which Masons identify themselves to one another, and even these have been compromised on numerous occasions by apostates—starting, as we have seen, in 1730. I would be not be surprised to find that one could learn every thing that is "officially secret" from books available in any good public library. Given that nothing is really secret, and given the fact that contemporary Freemasonry comes in for a good deal of criticism for "being so secretive," it might seem prudent for the Order to accept the suggestions of its critics and open up. Actually, from the perspective of this writing, there is a lot more to it than that.

Back in 1961, when I first started interior work, I studied with a man, also a Brother Mason, named Joel S. Goldsmith. His students used to join him for lunch on Sunday; and one day after the meal he held his empty water glass up in front of him and said, "Secrecy is the vessel within which you contain your spiritual experience." It is an age old teaching; in the Bible it is put as, "Cast not your pearls before swine." Until one has spent a great deal of time in the interior work, one's interior experience is very delicate. If you share your experience with skeptics and people who do not, or cannot, understand it, they will convince you that you are mistaken; and you will lose the benefit of your interior work. Here is the purpose of Masonic secrecy: the real secrets of Masonry are the secrets of your own being that you learn about yourself as you go through the processes I shall describe. Masonic secrecy conceals very little. It is, itself, part of the Masonic symbolism; it is a symbol to convey this age-old teaching.

Still, the secrets of one's own being are very private things, indeed. In preparing this part of the presentation I have had my Masonic obligations, my obligations to my Brethren and their sensibilities, and the idea of discretion much in mind. Where appropriate, I have referenced the published Emulation Workings which are printed largely in plain text. Beyond that, I have been guided in this regard by three authoritative books written by well respected Masonic authors:

*Freemasons' Guide and Compendium* by Bernard E. Jones;<sup>36</sup> *Symbolism in Craft Freemasonry* by Colin Dyer; and *The Craft* by John Hamill. Each of these authors is, or was, a Grand Officer in the United Grand Lodge of England. I have taken the view that if these Brethren have discussed a symbol in their published works, the symbol is a proper subject for public presentation. I will not always put the same interpretation on the symbols as those authorities have used. However, in devising my own understandings I think that I have been, in principle, faithful to the meaning of the ritual and the Lectures. In many respects conducting one's own analysis and developing one's own interpretation of the symbolic structure is part of coming to understand Freemasonry.

I must emphasize that the ideas that I will present are mine; they do not represent the views of any Grand Lodge or of any Private Lodge. Further, in the next pages I will be writing of some very exalted states of consciousness and equating them with Masonic ranks. I want to state explicitly that the United Grand Lodge of England does not claim to produce these states of consciousness in its Candidates. Masonic Lodges confer the Degrees of Freemasonry and with those Degrees goes a titular rank and the introduction to a group of symbols. The interpretation and application of those symbols is the responsibility of the individual Mason. Any growth or maturation of the sort of which I shall write in the following paragraphs, if it occurs at all, is the responsibility of the individual Mason as he studies and contemplates the symbols of Freemasonry.

## THE FIRST DEGREE

### THE TRACING BOARD

Masonic Tracing Boards are pictures which illustrate the symbolic structure of the Order. Figure 8 shows the Tracing Board of the First Degree,<sup>37</sup> and it is used in the Lectures as a device to present the symbolic structure of the Degree. To me, this picture presents the basic principles of western metaphysics as they were understood in the Renaissance. Three fundamental ideas seem to characterize that metaphysics: First, the Deity was considered to be without limit. This resulted in a view of all existence as a single, tightly integrated unity centered on the Deity. A particularly clear statement of this view comes from *The Hermetica*: "... for God contains all things, and there is nothing that is not in God, and nothing which God is not. Nay, I would rather say, not that God *contains* all things, but that, to speak the full truth, God *is* all things."<sup>38</sup> This is an Hermetic statement of neo-Platonism. Second, earthly experiences were considered to reflect events in the heavenly realms; the succinct statement of this idea is, "As above; so below." This epigram is a consequence of the integrated view of the

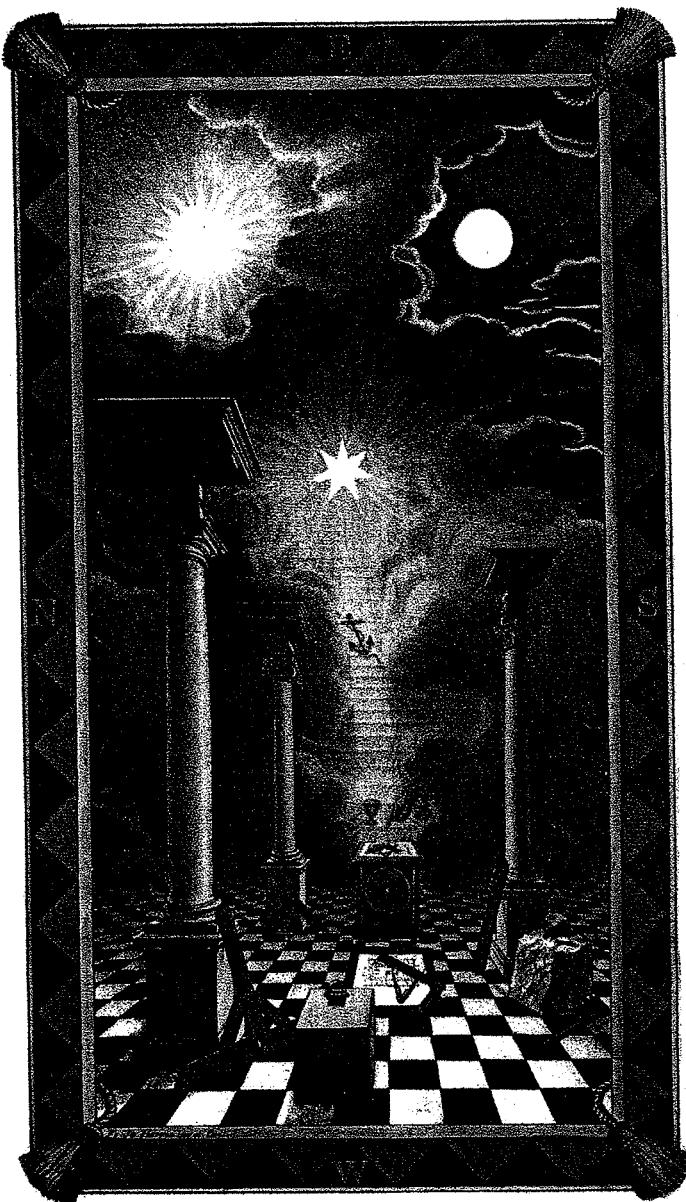


Figure 8. Tracing Board of the First Degree, John Harris, c. 1820.

world described above. In a universe regarded as a single, consistent, Divine Entity there must be a correspondence between that which occurs in the higher (heavenly, causal) levels and that which occurs at the lower (earthly) ones.<sup>39</sup> Third, knowledge of the "higher," or more subtle, aspects of the Universe was thought to be available only by experience (i.e. by one's own revelation); certainly not by logical argument, nor, ultimately, by faith in the authority of another's revelations.<sup>40</sup> I will seek to illustrate these principles which make up the renaissance world view using the Masonic symbolism, as represented on the First Degree Tracing Board.

The first of the principles is the unity of the system and the consequent omnipresence of the Deity. For me, this idea is represented on the First Degree Board by a group of three symbols which are called, collectively, the "Ornaments of the Lodge." The fact that the Masons who formulated our symbolism gathered these three objects into a single group seems to require that we consider them together and in relationship to each other. The Ornaments of the Lodge are the Blazing Star or Glory, the Chequered Pavement, and the Indented, Tessellated Border.<sup>41</sup> They are all intended to refer to the Deity. The Blazing Star or Glory is a straightforward heraldic representation of the Deity. Figure 9 is the obverse of the Great Seal of the United States, and the Deity is represented there

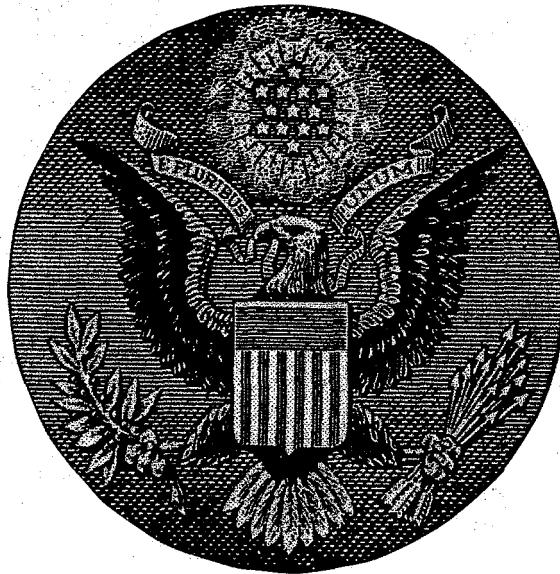


Figure 9. Obverse of the great seal of the United States of America.

in the same manner. The Blazing Star, shown in the Heavens, represents the Deity as It is, in all Its Glory, as It wills Itself into existence. The Chequered Pavement represents the Deity *as It is perceived to be* at the opposite pole of consciousness, here on Earth in ordinary life. The light and dark squares represent paired opposites, a mixture of mercy and justice, reward and punishment, vengeance and loving kindness. They also represent the human experience of life, light and dark, good and evil, easy and difficult. But that is only how it is perceived. The squares are not the symbol; the *Pavement* is the symbol. The light and dark squares fit together with exact nicety to form the Pavement, a single thing, a unity. The whole is surrounded by the Tessellated Border which binds it into a single symbol. In this representation on the Tracing Board the Border binds not simply the squares, but the entire picture, into a unity. The Tassels can be thought of as representing Divine agency which operates throughout the whole.

#### COLUMNS OR PILLARS

Except in the case of the Glory which stands alone, the idea of duality occurs throughout the Board—from the black and white squares at the bottom to the Sun and Moon, an ancient symbol for the paired opposites of masculine and feminine, at the top. In the central area of the board duality is represented by two of the three columns; but here, as we rise from the fixity of the elemental existence of the physical world, the third column introduces a new idea. The striking thing about these columns is that each is of a different Order of Architecture. In Masonic symbolism they are assigned names: Wisdom to the Ionic Column in the middle, Strength to the Doric Column on the left, and Beauty to the Corinthian Column on the right.<sup>42</sup> The Three Pillars, like the Tree of Life, speak of a universe in which expansive and constraining forces are held in balance by a coordinating agency. In Masonic terms this idea is called the "Rule of Three."

#### FOUR WORLDS

The Universe as it was perceived<sup>43</sup> by the Renaissance philosophers consisted of "four worlds." *The Hermetica* describes such a division with each of the four worlds associated with one of the classical "elements."<sup>44</sup> Kabbalah has the same division as review of "Tree Mechanics" will indicate.<sup>45</sup> They are the "elemental" or physical world (Asiyah), the "celestial" world of the psyche or soul (Yezirah), the "supercelestial" world or spirit (Beriah), and the Divine World (Azilut). We can see that these same levels are represented on the board. The Pavement represents the "elemental," physical world, the central part of the Board including the columns and most of the symbols, represents the "celestial"

world of the psyche or soul, the Heavens represent the "supercelestial" world of the Spirit, and the Glory, as we have seen, represents the Divinity.

In Figure 10 I have related these macro-cosmic symbols to the Tree of Life. Since a person starting on a Masonic career enters the Lodge from his life in the physical world, I will consider the Lodge to be a representation of the psyche which is the world of consciousness contiguous with the physical world. The psyche is also the bridge between the physical world and the World of the Spirit. Because of that, this Tree on which we shall place the symbols of Masonry is a Yeziratic Tree. The Corinthian Column, a style derived from the ideas of energy and growth, relates to the active, expansive, right hand column. The simple, austere Doric Column relates to the passive, constraining, left hand column. The intermediary, balanced, Ionic Column, relates to the central column of consciousness. The uppermost three of the Four Worlds are represented here by three Masonic symbols called the three Great Lights or the "furniture of the lodge."<sup>46</sup> These are shown on the central axis of the diagram, the Volume of the Sacred Law, the Compasses and the Square; and they represent the three upper worlds. (Since this is a Yeziratic Tree, the lowest world of materiality is not represented, nor is there a Masonic symbol for it. In the ritual practice I think Asiyah, the fourth world of materiality, is represented by the body of the Candidate as he contemplates and relates to these three symbols in the course of the ritual.) The Volume of the Sacred Law represents Azilut, the Divine World which is the source of the material it contains. I have placed it above the rest of the diagram to indicate that it represents the Divine World. The Compasses represent the world of the Spirit, and I have shown them in the upper face of this Tree, the part of the Tree that is contiguous with Beriah. The Square represents Yezirah; and I have placed it at Tiferet, the central sefirah and the essence of that world. These six symbols will be shown on all the Tree diagrams that we will use and will form the background for the more detailed consideration of the Degrees.

#### THE LADDER

Refer again to the First Degree Tracing Board (Figure 8). Thus far we have not spoken of its central feature, the Ladder.<sup>47</sup> Remember that one of the ideas which was fundamental to Renaissance thought was the concept of a Macrocosm, considered to be the universe as a whole and a corresponding Microcosm, considered to be the human individual. The idea is that the universe and human beings are structured using the same principles (both having been made "in the image of God"), and that in the course of events there is always a correspondence between activity in the greater and lesser worlds. This is a necessary consequence of the principle of "Oneness." We have seen that in *The Hermetica*, "As above, so below," sums up this idea; and it was treated in

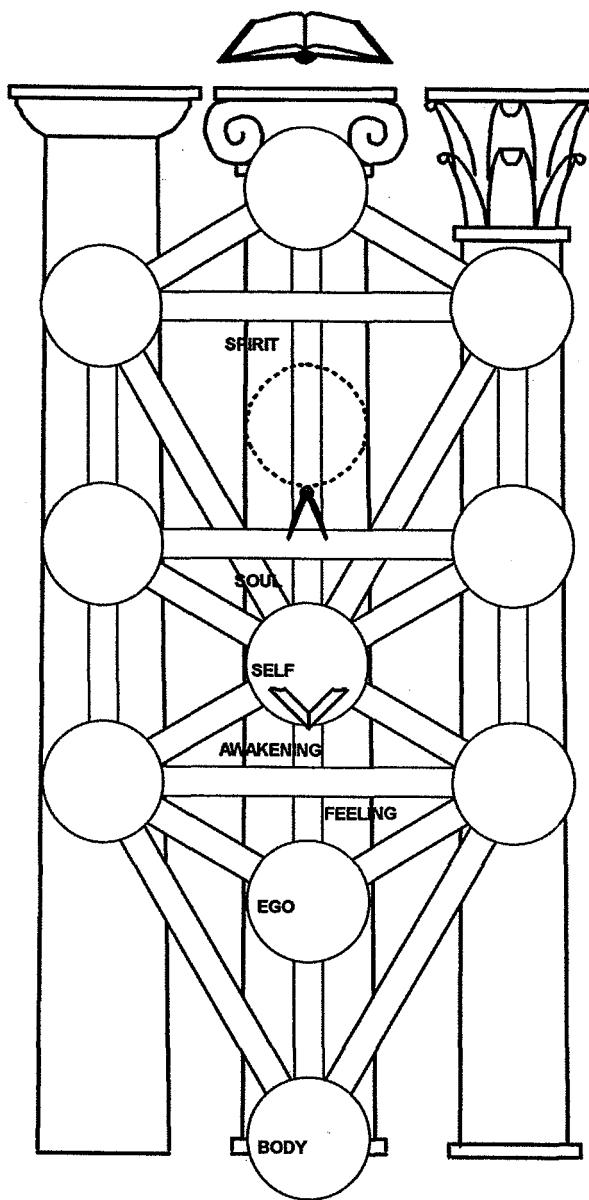


Figure 10. The Tree of Life with Masonic symbols.

great detail in England in the early 17th century by Robert Fludd in his *History of the Two Worlds*.<sup>48</sup> Now, in the Macrocosm the Ionic, Corinthian, and Doric Columns represent the "Rule of Three." What about the Microcosm?

The Ladder extends from the Scripture open on the Pedestal to the Glory which represents the Deity; and in the Masonic symbolism it is said to be Jacob's Ladder. We will consider the ladder together with another symbol, the Point-within-a-Circle-Bounded-by-Two-Parallel-Lines which is shown on the face of the Pedestal. We have seen this combination before, on Frontispiece to Masonic Miscellanies and in the illustration from the French exposure. It is our old friend, the Ladder between two opposite verticals, two of which (the Lines) relate to active and passive functions while the third, the Ladder, reaches to the heavens and provides the means "... by which we hope to arrive there."<sup>49</sup> Taken together the Ladder and the Point-within-a-Circle-bounded-by-Two-Parallel-Lines are an abbreviated version of the Tree of Life, and they represent the human individual, made "... in the image of God," according to the same principles on which the Universe is based. The ladder, which I think is a representation of individual consciousness, has "three principal rounds" or levels, represented by Faith, Hope and Charity, which correspond to the three lower levels of the four-level Universe we observed earlier. Both the Macrocosmic "Landscape" and the Microcosmic "Man" share the fourth level of Divinity, represented by the Blazing Star, or Glory.

#### EAST-WEST DIRECTION

There is one more idea we should touch on before we leave the First Degree Board. A Mason is sometimes called "a traveling man," and one of the Masonic catechisms gives us a little insight into this epithet.

Q. - Did you ever Travel?

A. - My forefathers did.

Q. - Where did they travel?

A. - Due East and West.

Q. - What was the object of their travels?

A. - They traveled East in search of instruction, and West to propagate the knowledge they had gained.<sup>50</sup>

Notice the cardinal points of the compass on the Border of this Tracing Board; they define the East—West direction as it is to be understood in terms of Masonic Symbolism, and in doing so they make some comment about the nature of the journey which the new Mason apprentices himself to undertake. That journey from West to East is represented, symbolically, by the progress

through the Masonic Degrees; and it is, in fact, the ascent up Jacob's Ladder—one of the "Principal Rounds" for each Degree. This should be no surprise. As we have seen, the notion of a "mystical ascent" was part and parcel of the Hermetic/Kabbalistic Tradition. We should note that this journey is an ascent in consciousness; from ordinary consciousness of the physical world, through the soul and the spirit, to a consciousness of the Divine Presence. Reuchlin describes such an ascent in *De Arte Kabbalistica*,<sup>51</sup> another can be found in the *Hermetica*.<sup>52</sup> Some of these ascents are deeply Christian in their character. In *De Occulta Philosophia* Agrippa "... rises through the three worlds, the elemental world, the celestial world, the supercelestial world... where he is in contact with angels, where the Trinity is proved, ... the Hebrew names of God are listed, though the Name of Jesus is now the most powerful of all Names."<sup>53</sup> Viewed with these writings in the background, Masonic symbolism certainly seems to reflect these ideas.

#### THE FIRST DEGREE ON THE TREE OF LIFE

The First Degree Tracing Board gives an overview of western metaphysics and of the objectives of Masonry. The idiom in which Masonry's teaching is communicated in the ritual is the building of King Solomon's Temple; and our the key to interpreting Masonic symbolism will be to remember that in one of the Volumes of the Sacred Law we are told that "... ye are the Temple." Masonic labor is interior work, work on one's self. When a Candidate is first admitted into the Order he is said to be an Apprentice, and as a beginner his labors take place on the Ground Floor of the Temple. In Kabbalistic terms, we may think that the Ground Floor corresponds to the lower face of the Tree, the part of the psyche in intimate contact with the physical world. In Figure 11 we see the prominent symbols of the Apprentice Degree "on the Tree." Note first, Faith, Hope and Charity, to the left. I have placed them to indicate that the "ladder" corresponds to the central column of the Tree, and the three "Principal Rounds" correspond to the major steps up the central column. Faith, the first principal round is the appropriate attitude for the Apprentice. He has no experience of his own on which to base his expectations; he must place his faith in the Deity and in the integrity of the more experienced Brethren who will teach him.

The path between Hod and Nezah represents the threshold of ordinary consciousness, and I have indicated that it represents also the Door of the Lodge. That is the door on which the Candidate knocks when he joins the Order; and it is the material which he will find beyond this door, in the realm of his own unconscious, that he promises to keep secret. Kabbalistically, the great lower

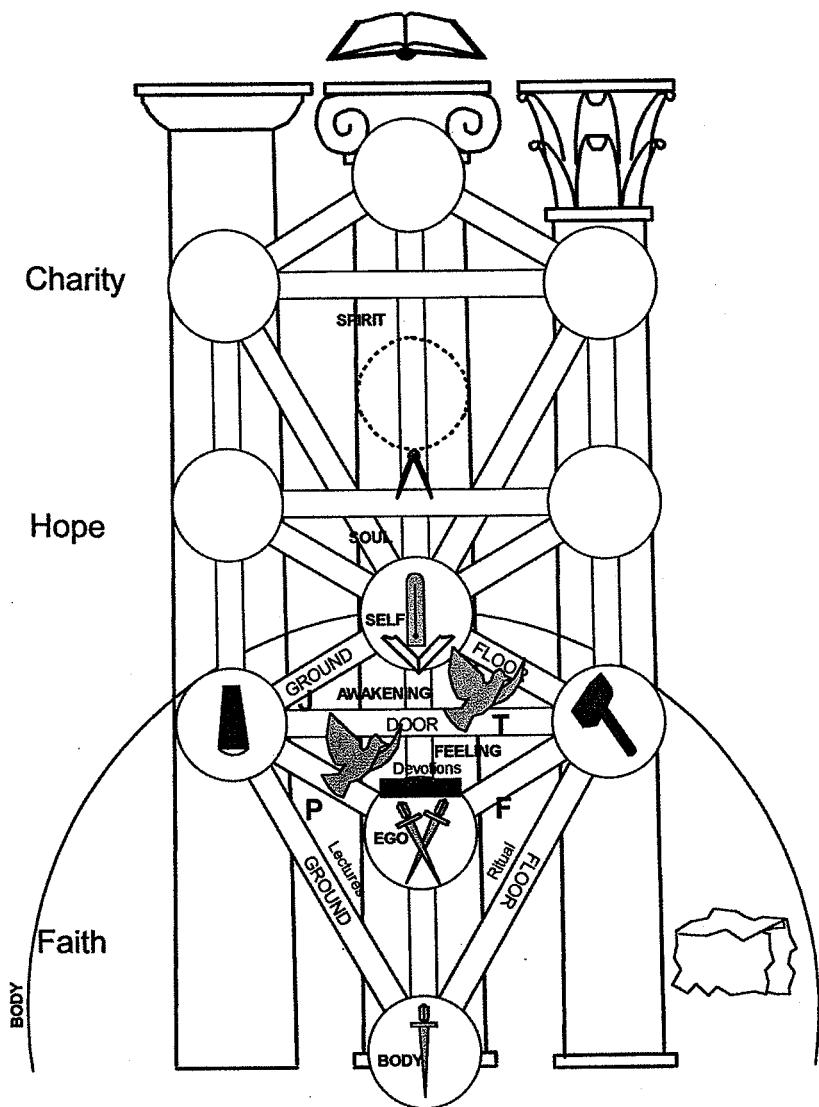


Figure 11. The Tree of Life with Masonic symbols of the First Degree.

triad of Hod, Nezah and Malkhut represents the level of consciousness ordinarily experienced by most human beings, and that is where most of the Apprentice's labor is accomplished. There is not much in the way of elevated consciousness involved in the First Degree; but if he practices what he is taught, the newly made Mason will become awake to all sorts of new ideas.

The Officers of a Lodge are seven in number, and in this interpretation they represent the seven levels of consciousness on the central column of the Tree. Upon the central column we see the Masonic Jewels (shown in light blue) which designate those Officers of the Lodge who work on, or supervise, the Ground Floor.<sup>54</sup> At Malkhut is the Tyler, and his Jewel is a sword. He is the sentry who stands outside the door of the Lodge and keeps off intruders. His function is analogous to that of the central nervous system which is a highly selective filter of the physical stimuli with which we are constantly bombarded. He is directly responsible to the Inner Guard, a second sentinel whose Jewel is two swords, crossed. The Inner Guard's post is inside the door of the Lodge. I have placed him at Yesod. Like the ego, he responds to the information he receives from the Tyler. He determines with selectivity who will be admitted to the Lodge. In this respect his function is analogous to that of the ego, in that material is admitted into consciousness only when the ego recognizes it. In most people the Inner Guard/ego devotes its attention exclusively to the requirements of the Tyler/physical senses. As we will see in a moment, Masonry requires the Inner Guard to place his attention elsewhere.

Above the swords of the two sentinels are two doves in the triads of Feeling and Awakening, respectively. The Officers who wear these Jewels are called the Junior and Senior Deacons; and just as the dove is said to be a messenger of Divine Grace, so the Deacons are messengers who convey commands and information on behalf of the more senior Officers of the Lodge. For me, they are analogous to those levels of consciousness called feeling and awakening which provide messages to the ego with information about what is going on in the deeper levels of the psyche, the part of which we are usually unconscious.

Let us leave the Officers for a moment and consider the tools which are shown in dark blue. There are three Working Tools associated with each Degree; and those of the First Degree are the Gavel, the Chisel, and the 24 Inch Gauge.<sup>55</sup> These are tools of action; tools used to accomplish work. I have placed the Gavel at Nezah because its energy and rhythmic blows suggest capacity to experience passion which is associated with that sefirah. The chisel is a tool which works only on the surface of stone, and it represents education. It goes nicely at Hod, which is associated with classification and analysis; useful and necessary, but superficial activities. The 24 Inch Gauge, which is related in Masonic terms to the length of the day, is placed at Yesod. It is a tool which measures quantity. By

its use, the Apprentice determines when to apply passion and when analysis—and how much of each to use in each case. In other words, he coordinates the use of passion and analysis.

The use of tools in this way is an interesting image. Tools are things one owns. They are one's property, and one must learn to use them properly. It is of significance that Masonry represents the functions of passion and analysis as tools. As one begins the process of interior work and starts to examine himself with honesty, one often finds he is ruled by one of these "tools"; in our society it is often passion. Masonic labor for the Apprentice includes discovering these "tools" within himself, understanding that they are "his"—not "him," bringing them under his control, and learning to use them. The image here also suggests that the Apprentice is being introduced to the application of the "Rule of Three."

The most senior of the Officers shown in this drawing is the Junior Warden, and his Jewel is the Plumb Rule. He is placed at Tiferet/Self. He is one of the principal Officers of the Lodge, and his task is to supervise the activities of the ground floor. When Masonic labor is being conducted the Inner Guard is supposed to "obey the commands of the Junior Warden."<sup>56</sup> This duty is analogous to the Kabbalistic discipline requiring the ego/Yesod to direct its attention up the Path of Honesty to the Self/Tiferet.

Although the labor of the Apprentice is oriented toward interior work, the Ground Floor is contiguous with the physical world. Since a stable situation in ordinary life is a prerequisite for interior work, the Apprentice is taught the appropriate manner in which to relate to events and persons the world. Masonic symbolism uses the Cardinal Virtues for this purpose,<sup>57</sup> and we can put them on the Tree very nicely. Imagine the mature Apprentice operating at the level of Yesod and applying his new found skills to his routine worldly activities. The application (Yesod) of truth (Tiferet) to the conduct of his analysis (Hod) yields Justice; I have placed that initial in that triad. Similarly, the application (Yesod) of truth (Tiferet) to the use of the passions (Nezah) is Temperance. The application (Yesod) of passion (Nezah) to one's actions in the world (Malkhut) produces Fortitude; and the application (Yesod) of analysis (Hod) to one's actions in the world (Malkhut) is Prudence.

Taken together these symbols suggest that by labor in the First degree the Apprentice is expected to do five things: (1) Discipline himself and hold his interior experience close. (2) Identify and take control of his capacities for passion and analysis. (3) Ensure that it is his Self and not his ego that determines what is admitted into his consciousness. (4) Practice the Cardinal Virtues; doing so will produce a life with the sort of internal stability which is required for further advancement. Lastly (5), it seems to me that the fundamental objective of labor in the Apprentice Degree is placing the Inner Guard under the command of the

Junior Warden; i.e. the individuation of the Self in the sense that the term is used in Jungian psychology.

On the right side of the Tree we see the "Rough Ashlar" which is one of the Immovable Jewels in the Lodge.<sup>58</sup> Like Faith, it relates to the "Ground Floor," the whole Lower Face of the Tree. It represents the state in which the Apprentice finds himself as he starts his work. An ashlar is a building stone, and a rough ashlar is a stone which has just been cut from the quarry. Much work must be done on such a stone before it is ready to be placed in the building. On the other hand, an ashlar is an individual stone; it has been separated out; it will never be part of the bedrock again. In an analogous way, the Apprentice who has been instructed in, and understands even a little of the symbolism we have reviewed in this Degree is an individual. He is in possession of himself; he is responsible for his actions; he will never be part of the mass again.

#### THE SECOND DEGREE TRACING BOARD

The Second Degree Tracing Board is shown in Figure 12. The first thing to notice is that, in contrast to the Tracing Board of the preceding degree which was a landscape (so to speak), this is an interior. It is, however, a very unusual interior. Notice the sun; it is a very unusual building that has the sun shining *inside!* With his treatment of the sun the artist tells us that, in spite of his meticulous attention to detail, it is not a physical structure that is represented here. Masonically, it is a representation of Solomon's Temple; and the interior Sun is a representation of the Divine Presence. Here, again, we remember that "... ye are the Temple." This is a representation of the individual human being. Probably you have already recognized the pattern to which I have been alluding throughout this writing: This is a ladder (it has become a staircase) between two opposite verticals. I believe this to be a symbolic reference to the Tree of Life. Just to finish off this general correspondence, note that there are four levels in the picture: the ground floor, in contact with the Physical World; the first floor to which the staircase leads, representing the Psyche, the world of the Soul; a gallery at the top of the picture, pale blue in color representing the Spirit; and the Sun, representing Divinity. Outside, near the river, there is an ear of corn growing. It tells us that the processes we are about to consider are processes of natural maturation.

The staircase is guarded at the bottom by the Junior Warden, and it should come as no surprise that the Candidate in the Second Degree has to climb these stairs. As we have seen, the Junior Warden represents the Self; and the symbolism seems to suggest that one cannot pass this sentinel and undertake to climb

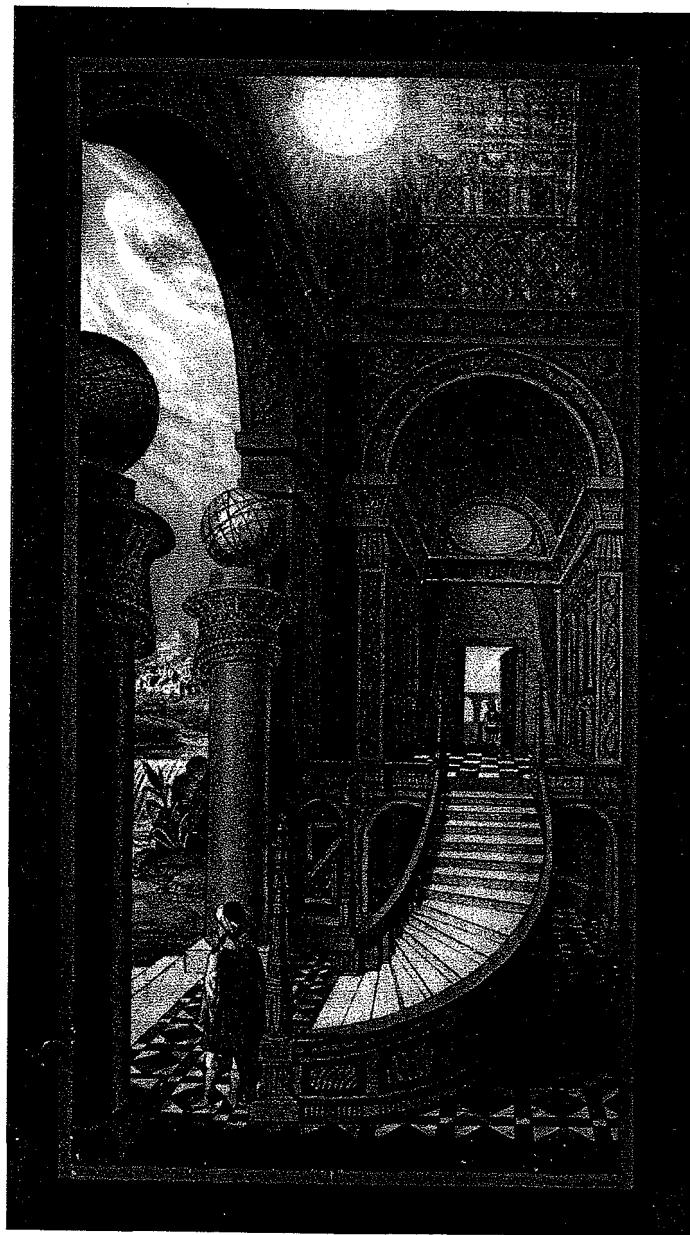


Figure 12. Tracing Board of the Second Degree, John Harris, c. 1820.

the stairs until his Self has individuated. There is a ritual examination involved in passing this guard; and the ritual makes it quite clear that, if one attempts to climb these interior stairs without the appropriate motive and without doing the necessary preliminary work, he will find himself in very serious trouble. At the top of the stairs there is a porch which leads to a room called the Middle Chamber.<sup>59</sup> At the door we see the Senior Warden who presides over that place.

In this picture the Winding Stairs, as they are called, consist of fifteen steps. Earlier Tracing Boards, such as the one in Figure 13, (c. 1801), and the one in the Frontispiece from *Masonic Miscellanies* (Figure 4), show only seven steps. I think that this is not the major change that it might seem to be. In one way or another the ritual and Lectures relate seven of the steps to the Liberal Arts and Sciences, five of the steps to the five Classical Orders of Architecture, and three of the steps to the principal characters in the Traditional History of the Third Degree. Seven steps are also related to the seven Officers of the Lodge.<sup>60</sup> I'm quite sure that the staircases in the early pictures conveyed the same teachings, but the three steps were included in the five, and the five were included in the seven. This overlapping of the groups is supported by Second Lecture.<sup>61</sup> In any case, the reference to the Liberal Arts and Sciences and the Five Orders of Architecture certainly points the Candidate toward a course of study which was the foundation of formal education in the renaissance. The reference to the History of the Third Degree will assist us in the interpretation of that Degree.

I have mentioned that the two pillars are opposites, and we know that because they are surmounted by the Celestial and Terrestrial Spheres, active and passive, respectively. They are made of brass, cast in the clay ground, and cast hollow "to hold the archives of Masonry."<sup>62</sup> This is an intriguing picture; by being metallic and cast in the earth, these pillars are related to the physical world; they are hollow to hold archives; and they are opposites. Now, we are looking at a yeziratic model of the individual; and an archival record in Yezirah of material relating to the physical world sounds a lot like memory (both conscious and unconscious)—organized into active and passive material. We will examine this concept in more detail when we put these symbols on the Tree.

Before we do that we must consider the Middle Chamber. That is the place where Fellow Crafts received their wages (note 60). This is presented as a cheerful idea in Masonic workings, but we may consider it more broadly. One only need remember what the Volume of the Sacred Law has to say about the "wages of sin" to realize that a place within one's self where wages are paid is a concept which should cause serious thought. Two other objects are to be found in the Middle Chamber. The first is the Perfect Ashlar "... for the experienced craftsman to try, and adjust, his jewels on";<sup>63</sup> the second is a representation of the Name of Deity, often represented by the Letter "G."<sup>64</sup> We will speak of both later.

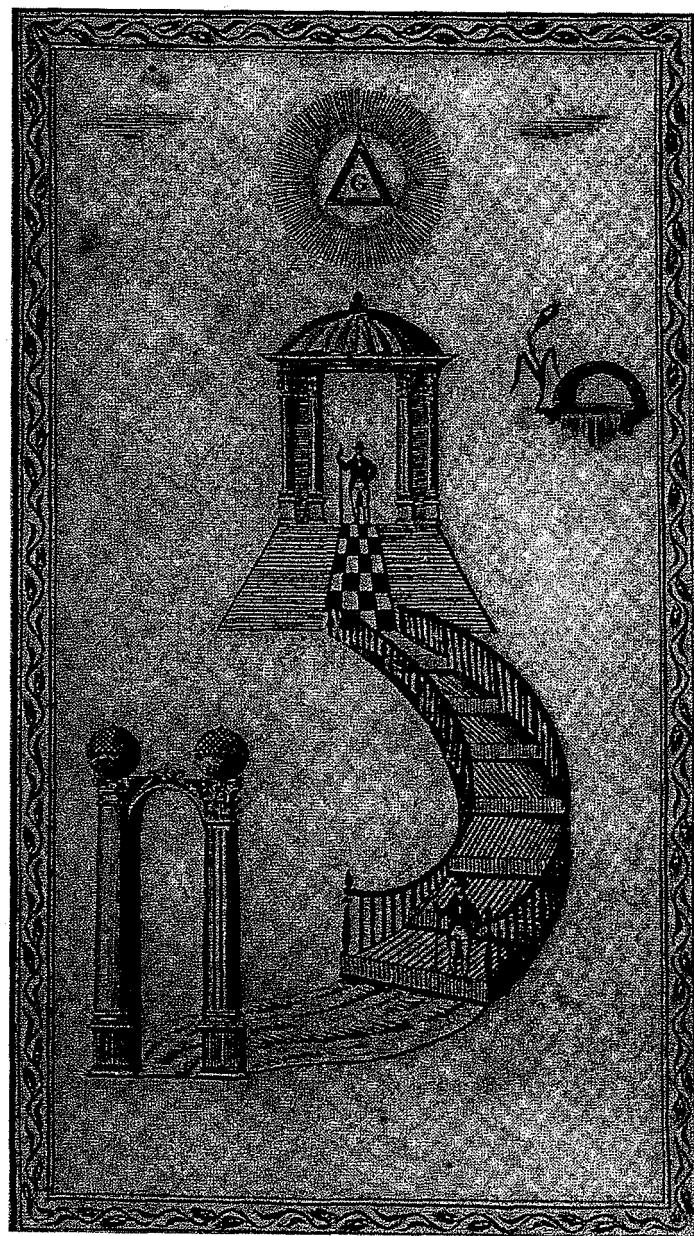


Figure 13. Second Degree Tracing Board, c. 1801.

## THE SECOND DEGREE ON THE TREE OF LIFE

In Figure 14 we see the Tree of Life we have been working on with Masonic symbols for the Second Degree added. At each of the seven levels on the Central Column of the Tree is one of the Seven Liberal Arts and Sciences; they fit very nicely. Some examples: Grammar is a structured mechanism for conducting effective external communication. It fits well on Malkhut, the sefirah of connection with the physical world. Geometry is said to be the most important of the seven Liberal Arts and Sciences; it is defined as "... a regular progression of science, from a point to a line, from a line to a superficies, from a superficies to a solid."<sup>65</sup> This "progression" was used by Proclus, the last of the Classical neo-Platonist philosophers, to describe the process by which the Deity projects Itself into existence.<sup>66</sup> Given this emphasis, the importance of Geometry becomes clear, and its place at Tiferet is very appropriate. Understanding Astronomy, by which the framers of the Liberal Arts and Sciences must certainly have meant astrology, has the connotation of being able to see and understand the Divine Plan. It is suitably placed in the Triad of the Spirit.

On the Central column can be found two new Jewels: the Level of the Senior Warden in the Triad of the Soul, and the Square of the Master in the Triad of the Spirit. I have included the Master here because he is introduced as a step in the Staircase; at this point, however, we will give our attention to the Senior Warden and the Middle Chamber which I have equated with the human soul.

Kabbalistically, the Soul, bounded by the truth of Tiferet, the judgment, discipline and constraint of Gevurah, and the mercy, expansiveness and generosity of Hesed, is the seat of morality. Consider the Working Tools of the Fellow Craft (in dark blue).<sup>67</sup> Unlike the tools of the previous Degree, which were tools of action, these are tools of testing. Each tool tests against an absolute criterion; two of these criteria are opposite to each other; the third defines the relationship between the other two. This sounds like a symbolic representation of morality. I have placed the Level at Gevurah because the tool suggests equality; judging fairly implies treating all persons in that way. In addition, horizontals convey, at least to me, the quality of stability. I have placed the Plumb Rule at Hesed because, for me, verticals have the quality of growth and aspiration (e.g. gothic architecture). The Square, which defines the relationship between the other two, is placed at Tiferet which has the function of holding the balance (maintaining the proper relationship) with respect to the two side sefirot.

A Perfect Ashlar is a building stone which has been worked to its proper shape and is ready to be placed in the building. In Figure 14 the Perfect Ashlar is shown to the right of the Tree at the level of the soul, and according to the Lectures such a stone is to be found within the Middle Chamber "... for the

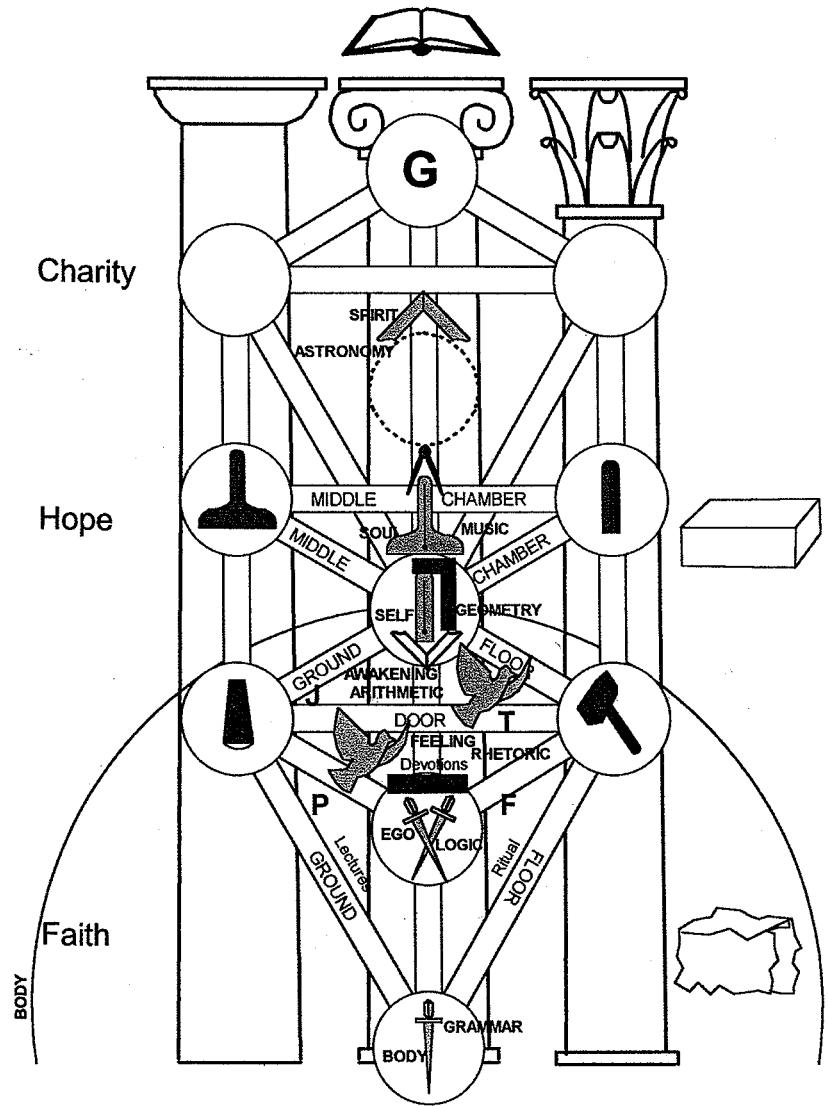


Figure 14. The Tree of Life with Masonic symbols of the Second Degree.

experienced craftsman to try, and adjust, his jewels on." This is a lovely image from the operative craft. The squares, levels, and plumbs used by the early operative masons were often made of wood; and when used on stones they gradually wore away and became unreliable. A perfect ashlar was kept on the building site so that these tools could be recalibrated as necessary. Masonically, we are told that we have such a standard in the Middle Chamber of our soul; it sounds to me like our conscience, the internal standard, provided by the Deity, by which we define and calibrate our morality.

In Figure 15 I have placed the two pillars, with their terrestrial and celestial spheres and their archival records, in the side triads which Kabbalah associates with the active and passive intellectual and emotional complexes. Now, it is generally acknowledged that emotional and intellectual material in our unconscious—particularly material that has been repressed—has a significant effect on our lives by compelling or inhibiting various forms of behavior. To the extent that a person is subject to such compulsion and inhibition, he is not in possession of his own will. One of the principal tasks for an individual working at this level is to bring material of this sort into his consciousness, drain the energy out of it, and remember it for future reference. By doing this he frees himself from compulsions and inhibitions and becomes free to choose for himself. Having completed this process, he may be said to enjoy "free will." As the Kabbalist at Tiferet who is working at the level of the soul has access to the material in these triads, so I think that the Fellowcraft climbing the stairs and working in the Middle Chamber has access to the archives in the pillars; and for the same purpose. They occupy a good deal of space on the diagram which is going to get crowded, so I will not show them again.

Lastly, in the Middle Chamber the Fellowcraft is enabled to observe a "sacred symbol" which is most commonly represented by the letter "G." It refers both to the science of Geometry and to the Name of the Deity; and thus, in the words of Bernard Jones, "... we shall not be far wrong when we teach the Fellow Craft that the letter 'G' denotes God who is the Grand Geometrician of the Universe."<sup>68</sup> I have placed "G" at Keter. It is not the Divine Presence, but it is the *Yeziratic representation* of the Divine Presence. Because he has this glimpse, not of the Deity, but of the "Name of Deity" the Fellow Craft may now practice the second of the Theological Virtues, Hope.

### THE THIRD DEGREE ON THE TREE OF LIFE

Figure 16 shows the Tree of Life with the Working Tools of a Master Mason added. These are the Pencil at Hokmah, the Skirret at Binah, and the Compasses

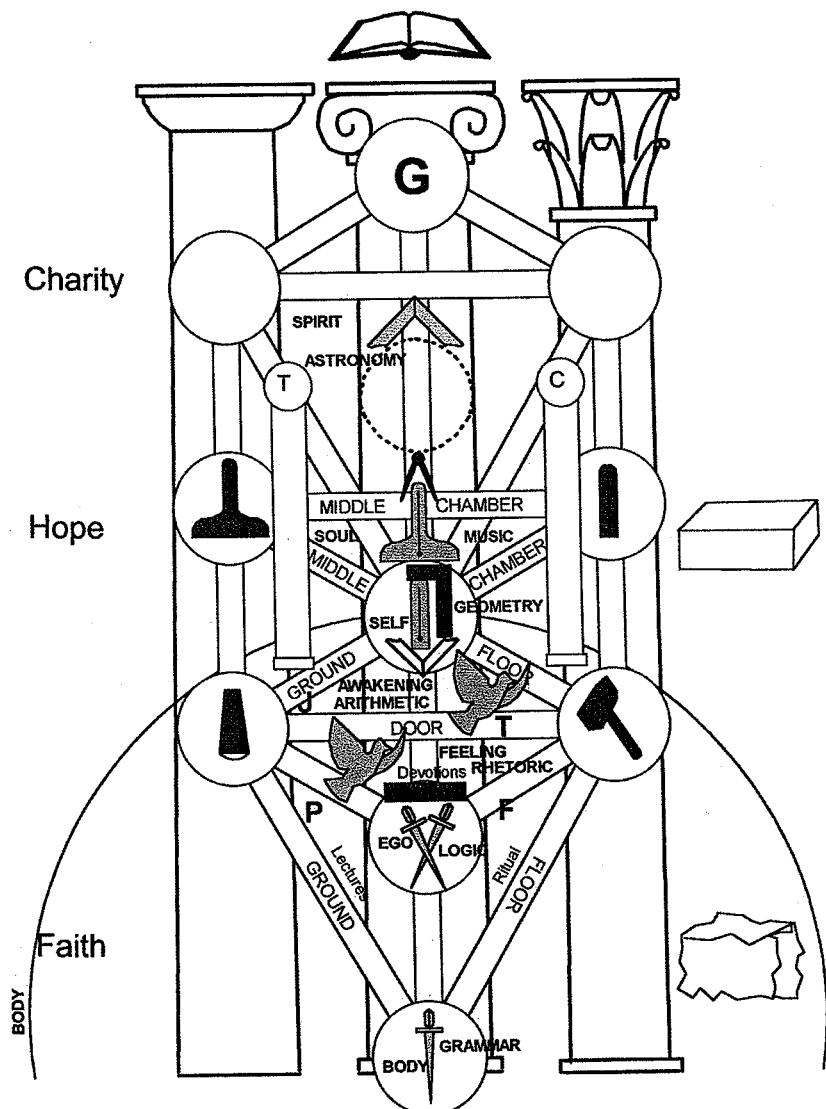


Figure 15. The Tree of Life with Masonic symbols of the Second Degree.

at Keter.<sup>69</sup> Again, these tools contrast with those of testing and those of action in the preceding Degrees. These are tools of *design*, tools of *creativity*; and from that point of view, alone, it seems appropriate to associate them with a part of the Tree which, as the diagram shows, is contiguous with the Spirit. Let us think first of the Pencil. It is often said that the Pencil reminds us that all our actions are recorded in the upper worlds.<sup>70</sup> I certainly have no argument with that idea, but I think there is more. Think about what happens when you write or draw with a pencil. At the point of the pencil a very interesting phenomenon occurs; as you mark on the paper the idea or image which is resident in your mind—in Yezirah—*changes worlds*; and becomes manifest on the paper—in Asiyyah—as a text or as a picture. Text and pictures are the manifestation as which ideas and images exist in the physical world. Now think of the nature of Hokmah; it is the sefirah of revelation. Through the processes of inspiration and creativity genuinely original material from the Tiferet of Beriah, the World of Creation, enters our psyche at Keter; and we experience it first as a revelation, or as a flash of insight, at Hokmah. For me the Pencil, with its characteristic of enabling ideas to "change worlds," is a symbolic representation of Hokhmah's capacity for receiving revelation (creative material) from the Spirit. The tool at Binah is called the Skirret. It is actually a reel of string on a pin that can be stuck in the ground; and by tying the pencil to the string one is enabled to lay out large drawings and designs. But notice, when used in this way the Skirret is a constraint on the Pencil; just as Binah, Understanding is a constraint on Hokmah, Revelation. The Compasses are actually Dividers; and they are a tool of proportion, appropriate to keep things in balance. I have placed them at Keter where they also indicate that the two sides to the Tree become one in the last analysis. To the right of the Tree is a Tracing Board, the third of the Immovable Jewels. It, too, is an instrument of creativity and design and appropriate for the creative level of the Spirit where it indicates that labor in this Degree is concerned with understanding and cooperating with the Divine Plan.

### THE THIRD DEGREE TRACING BOARD

In fact, there is a good deal more to the Third Degree than the Master Mason's tools indicate. Figure 17 shows the Tracing Board of that Degree; and as you can see, the subject of the Degree is death. Many Masons think of the death in the Third Degree as representing the death of the physical body and the subsequent reward in the afterlife. I mean to make no criticism of that idea; but for me, that interpretation of the Third Degree is not entirely complete. The Third Degree, itself, is a ritual reenactment of a legendary assassination, an event which is said

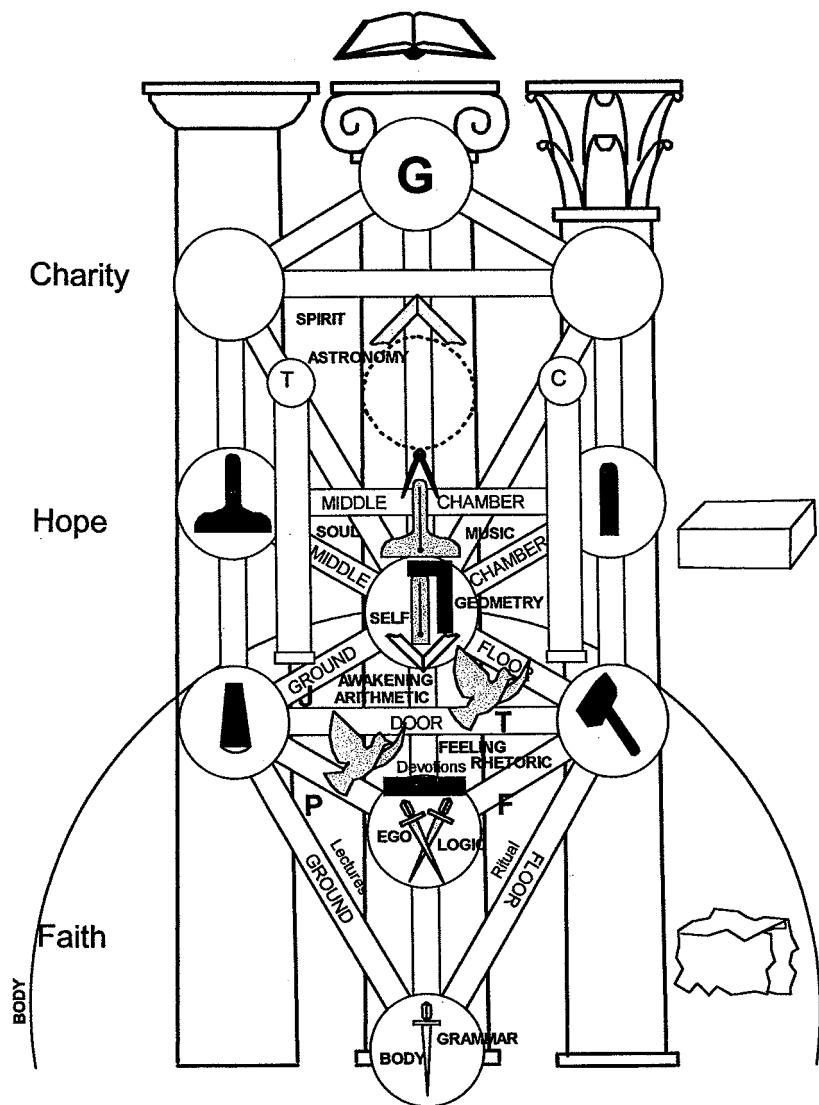


Figure 16 .The Tree of Life with Masonic symbols of the Third Degree.

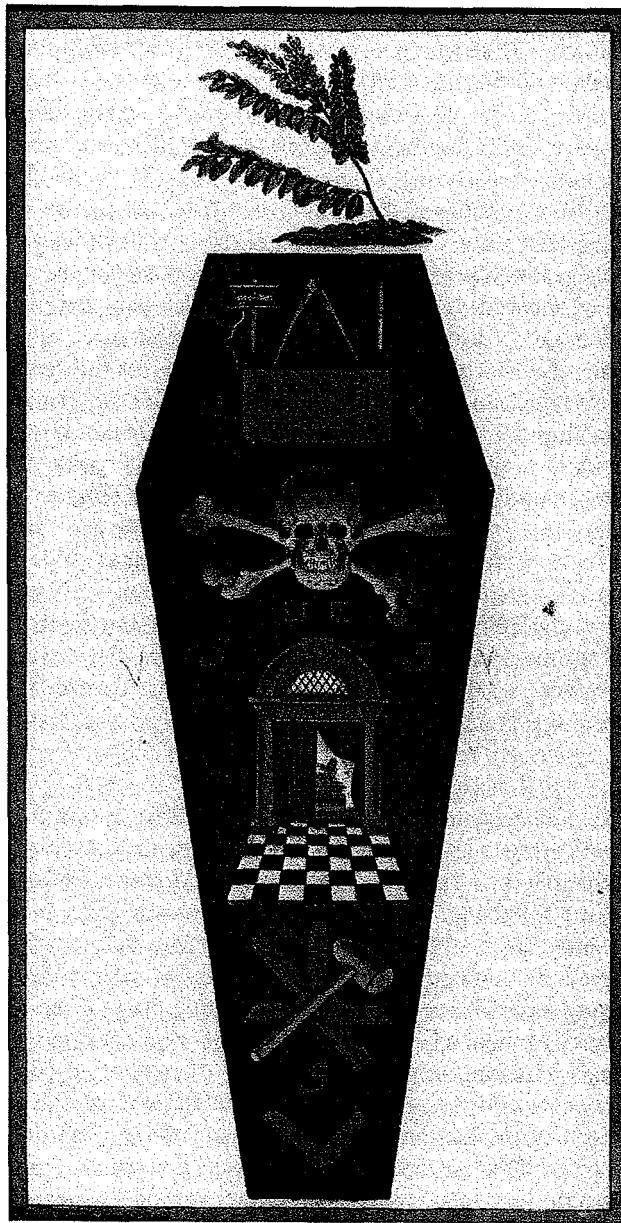


Figure 17. Tracing Board of the Third Degree, John Harris, c. 1820.

to have occurred at the building of Solomon's Temple, with the Candidate in the role of the victim.<sup>71</sup> It is something of a puzzle that such a thing should appear at so high a level on the Tree, almost in the presence of the Deity. Even more puzzling is the fact that the Principal Officers play a significant role in this drama. Let us back off from the symbolism for a moment, and seek a broader perspective.

The point is often made that the God of the Old Testament is a God of Vengeance and Destruction, while the God of the New Testament is a God of Love and Forgiveness. Many of the people who make this point seem to be seeking to advance some ideas of their own about which is better, but I think it would be a mistake to dismiss the God of Vengeance. After all, such a Deity is found in many places. The Hindu Deity, for example, has the qualities of the Creator, the Sustainer, and the Destroyer. Perhaps the Old and New Testaments should be read together. If we accept this idea, then we are faced with the question, "What does God destroy?" From the neo-Platonic point of view, the answer is, "When one is conscious of the Divine Presence, that Presence (God) destroys everything unlike Itself." That is because, from the neo-Platonic point of view, God is as everything that is real; everything unlike God is an illusion, an illusion that is dispelled when one is conscious of the Divine Presence. In the ritual drama of the Third Degree the part played by the Candidate places him in the role of the most junior of the Three Grand Masters who, according to the traditional history, presided at the building of Solomon's Temple. The symbolism of the Winding Stairs equates this role to that of the Junior Warden whose place on the Tree is at Tiferet. But what is there that is "illusory" about Tiferet, and how can we pull these ideas together?

In the Kabbalistic literature there are scores of different considerations of Tiferet. Two will serve to guide us in this situation. The first idea is a very traditional view that refers to Tiferet as "the Luminous Mirror." This idea suggests that Tiferet is the "reflection," the "image," the "bare surface" of the Beriatric (spiritual) and Azilutic (Divine) Tiferets. It conveys the idea that we are the image (the projection) of a more profound Divine Reality. The second idea is the one we have already seen; Tiferet is considered to be the place of the Self (in the Jungian context). Now, for a human, the Self is the concept of his personal individuality, the coordinating agency of his activities, the essence of his "being" as a free, independent entity who is responsible for himself. We have seen that labor in the First Degree has the goal of the individuation of the Self, and in the process of interior development this individuation is essential. Only a person operating from the level of Tiferet/Self can assume responsibilities and exercise freewill. This is the rationale for placing the Self at Tiferet, the coordinating agency of the Yeziratic Tree. But this concept of the Self as a "freestanding,"

entirely independent entity with genuine freewill is inconsistent with the existence of a Limitless Being. In the course of the mystical ascent there comes a time when one must surrender one's freewill to the Divine Will; and, indeed, one must give up one's concept of one's Self as an separate entity.

At the start of the Third Degree ritual drama we learn that personage being represented by the Candidate has been making his daily devotions in the Temple, the place of the Divine Presence. In the course of the drama it is this independent, separate Self, represented by the Junior Warden, which is slain. After the "death" the posture to which the Candidate is restored suggests a oneness with an elevated consciousness close to the top of the Tree and represented by the Master; it is an idea consistent with the teaching of "the Luminous Mirror."

On the coffin there is a representation of the Holy-of-Holies, and the veil is drawn back slightly, suggesting that by passing through this death-like process one can gain access to the Divine Presence which is said to reside in that place. W.L. Wilmshurst has described the Master Mason's Degree in such terms: "Hence the third degree is that of mystical death, of which bodily death is taken as figurative.... In all the Mystery-systems of the past will be found this degree of mystical death as an outstanding and essential feature prior to the final stage of perfection or regeneration."<sup>72</sup> Evidence of this idea of death not being an end, but rather a mystical process through which to pass, is to be found quite early in the development of the ritual. It is reflected on this French drawing in Figure 18. This drawing is from *La Desolation des Entrepreneurs Modernes*, (c. 1747)<sup>73</sup> and it shows the footsteps of the Candidate as he steps from the Square (Yezirah/psyche), past the emblems of death and past the grave, to the Compasses (Beriah/spirit). With this notion of transformation in mind I have placed the coffin/grave at the Daat of Yezirah, as you will see in Figure 15.

There is one more thing we should note before leaving the Tracing Board of the Third Degree: the Points of the Compass on the frame of the Board. You will remember that in the First Degree, East was at the top of the Board; here West is at the top. The mystical death, symbolized by the experience of the Master Mason's Degree is the cause of this change in orientation. When he started as an Apprentice the Candidate considered himself to be a physical being. As he progressed through the Apprentice and Fellow Craft Degrees he came to realize that he was a psychological being who possessed a body. Now, after the death of the Self, he realizes himself to be a spiritual being who possesses a psyche and a body. With this realization his orientation changes; and he looks to the West, toward the others who are striving along the path to the East. Now he can share what he has learned and offer assistance to those who seek it. That is, he travels "... West to propagate the knowledge (he) has gained." In doing that he practices the third of the Theological Virtues, Charity.

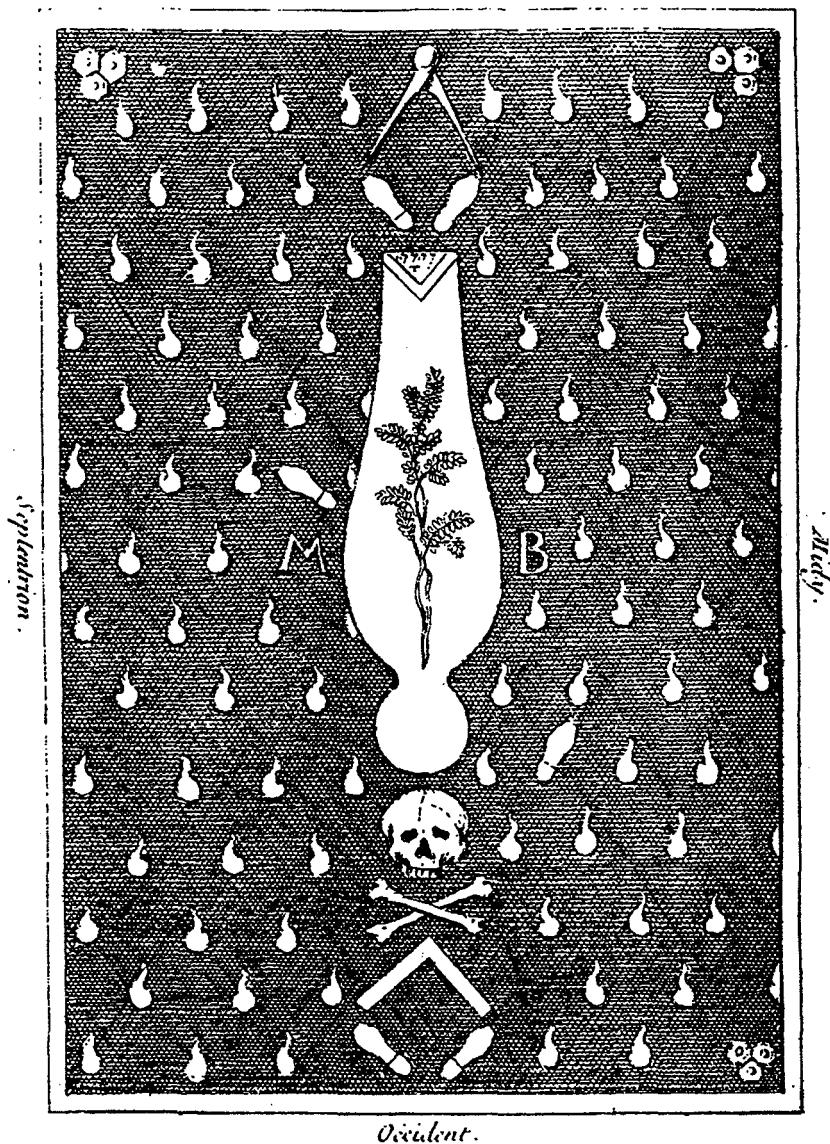


Figure 18. Plan of the Master's Lodge, *La Desolation des Entrepreneurs Modernes*, c. 1747.

## THE HOLY ROYAL ARCH

On the Tree in Figure 16 the Officers of the Lodge are placed on the seven levels of consciousness which form steps up the central column of the Tree. These are the levels of consciousness as they are defined in the Toledano School of Kabbalah.<sup>74</sup> The seven Officers placed in this way fit nicely; but the uppermost triad, the Triad of Divine Contact, is left empty. That empty triad suggests that the Masonic system, even though it contains so profound an event as the mystical death, is thus far incomplete. Freemasonry deals with this issue, but not in the Craft Lodge.

You will remember that at the time of the Union in 1816 it was agreed that Masonry consists "of Three Degrees, including the Holy Royal Arch"; and also that the Royal Arch is not a fourth degree, rather it is the completion of the Third Degree. The Tree in Figure 16 is pretty well full; there certainly does not seem to be a place for many more Masonic Symbols. How, then, are we to handle the Royal Arch? The answer is to be found in the fact that in Figure 15 the grave, representing the process of mystical death, is at Daat.

Now, Daat is not a sefirah. I think of Daat as a place in its own world where the texture of that world is such that one has access to the corresponding area in the next higher world. For an example, consider the situation one world lower. The Daat of the physical body is the person's face; and if you look at a person's face, you have access to his persona, an aspect of his psyche, at the Yesod of Yezirah. That is the nature of Daat; and with that in mind, let us turn to the consideration of the Royal Arch.

The three Degrees of Masonry take place at the building of King Solomon's Temple. That Temple was the wonder of its age, but it had a difficult history. In the process of various invasions of the Holy Land the Temple was finally destroyed. It was to be rebuilt several hundred years later, and the ritual drama of the Royal Arch takes place at that rebuilding.<sup>75</sup> The top half of Figure 18 shows the ruined temple. Remember that our approach to understanding Masonic symbolism is the scriptural passage that has guided us this far, "... ye are the Temple." The top of Figure 19 is a picture of each of us as we live our lives in the physical world: "after the Fall," as they would have said in the renaissance. But as the workmen began clearing the site for the rebuilding they discovered a vault (bottom half of Figure 19) which was quite unknown and still in its original state—pristine, undamaged, and completely unaffected by the destruction of the Temple. What is the nature of this vault? What does it mean for us? Well, on the floor around the Pedestal we see the signs of the zodiac, and that is a clue. But it is unnecessary for us to speculate. The artist has given us a detailed picture in Figure 20 which is a beautiful representation of the Chapter of the Royal



Figure 19. Tracing Board of the Royal Arch Degree, John Harris, c. 1820.

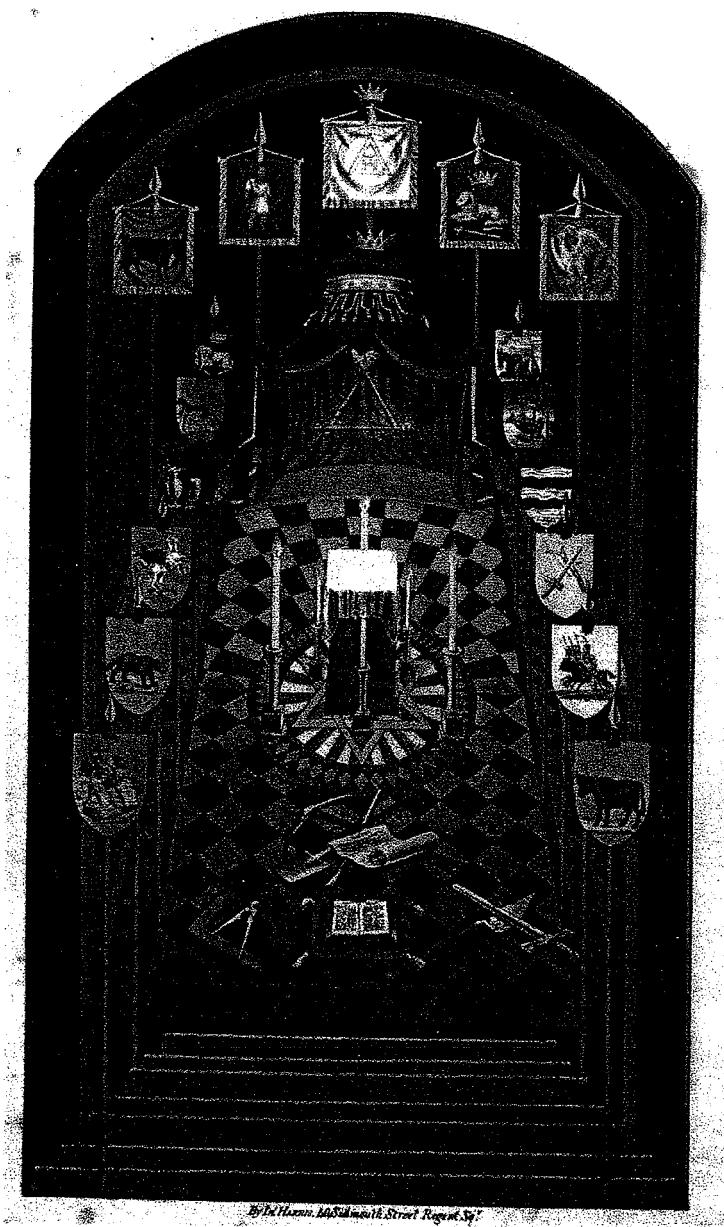


Figure 20. A representation of a Chapter of the Royal Arch, John Harris, c. 1820.

Arch. There are many openly Kabbalistic symbols here. In the East there are banners depicting the four sacred beasts, the Ox, the Lion, the Eagle, and the Man: the archetypes of the inhabitants of the four worlds taken from the vision of Ezekiel. Arranged down the sides of the picture are banners with the devices of the Twelve Tribes of Israel, they are analogous to the twelve signs of the zodiac, and they represent the twelve archetypal human groups. The central feature of this space is the Pedestal surrounded by six candles. Kabbalistically, the archetypes shown here are to be found around the Tiferet of Beriah, and it seems pretty clear that we are looking at a representation of that World of the Spirit.

Figure 21 shows the same space in diagrammatic form. I have taken it from the inside of the front cover of the Domatic Ritual Book. The same features are present: the Pedestal, the four banners in the East, and the twelve banners down each side of the space. The principal Officers of the Chapter all sit in the East, the Candidate is placed in the West on the kneeling stool at the bottom of the drawing. He is accompanied and guided through the ceremony by three Companions called Sojourners.

On the Jewel worn by every Royal Arch Mason are inscribed two Latin sentences. Translated, the first says, "Only the Key is missing.;" the second says, "If you know this, you know enough."<sup>76</sup> The first sentence tells us that here, encoded in symbols, is a complete body of knowledge which requires only a "key" to make it clear. I am going to suggest that the "Key" to understanding the Royal Arch is the Kabbalistic Tree of Life.

Figure 22 shows the Tree of Life superimposed on the diagram of the Chapter; and it seems to fit very nicely. On the central column we see the Sojourners at Malkhut, the Candidate at Yesod, the Volume of the Sacred Law at Tiferet, the Pedestal at Daat, and the three Principal Officers at the supernal sefirot. Now, consider this situation on the Extended Tree (Figure 23). We have seen that the mystical death, the experience of transition, occurs at the Daat of Yezirah. As the Candidate becomes aware of the corresponding part of the next higher world we would expect to find him at the Yesod of Beriah, and that is exactly where he is located as a Candidate in the Chapter.

Kneeling at Yesod (in Figure 22), the Candidate looks up the Path of Honesty to Tiferet, up the Path of Awe and *through* the Daat of Beriah to glimpse the Divine Persona at the Yesod of Azilut (Figure 23). This moment is a dramatic representation of the culmination of the mystical ascent, the final goal of the philosophers of the renaissance.

When this event occurs, not as a ritual representation in a Chapter Room in London, but in fact, within the consciousness of an incarnate human being, then he knows within himself El Hai Shaddai, the Living Almighty, the Presence of Divinity. In this realization he *knows*—not from reading, not from being told,

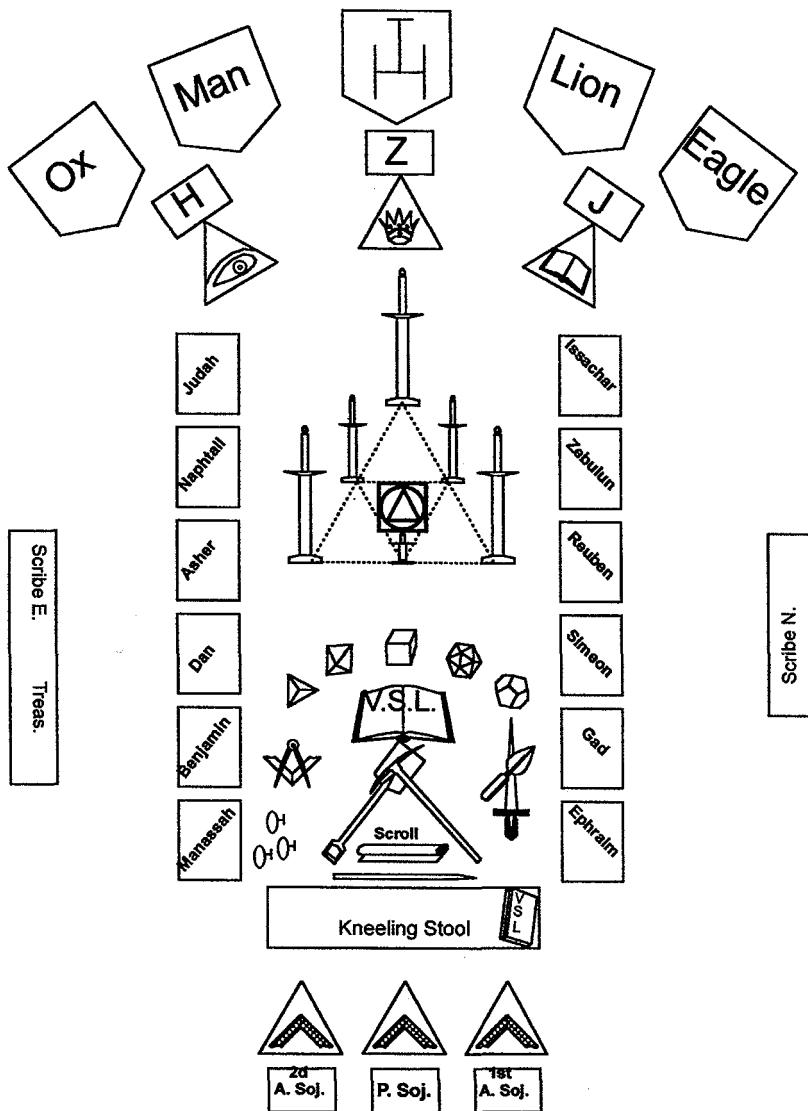


Figure 21. Representation of a Royal Arch Chapter from the Domatic Ritual Book

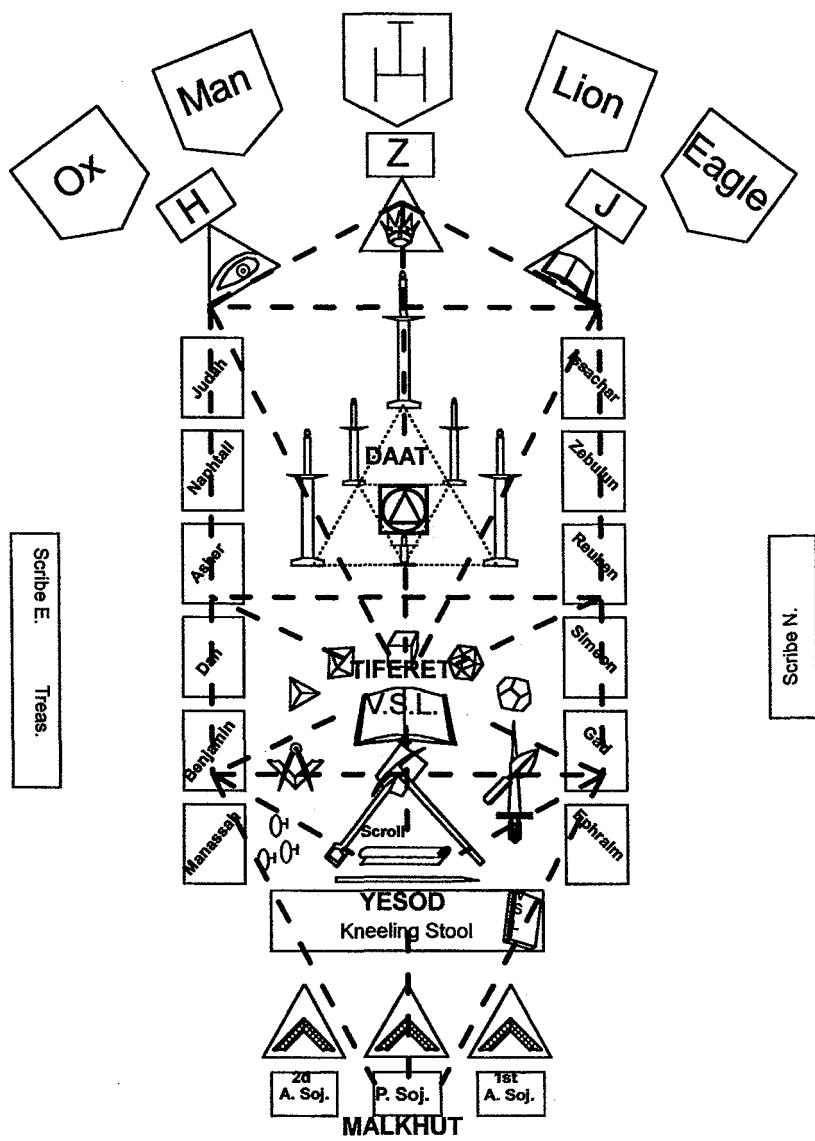


Figure 22. The Royal Arch Chapter superimposed on the Tree of Life.

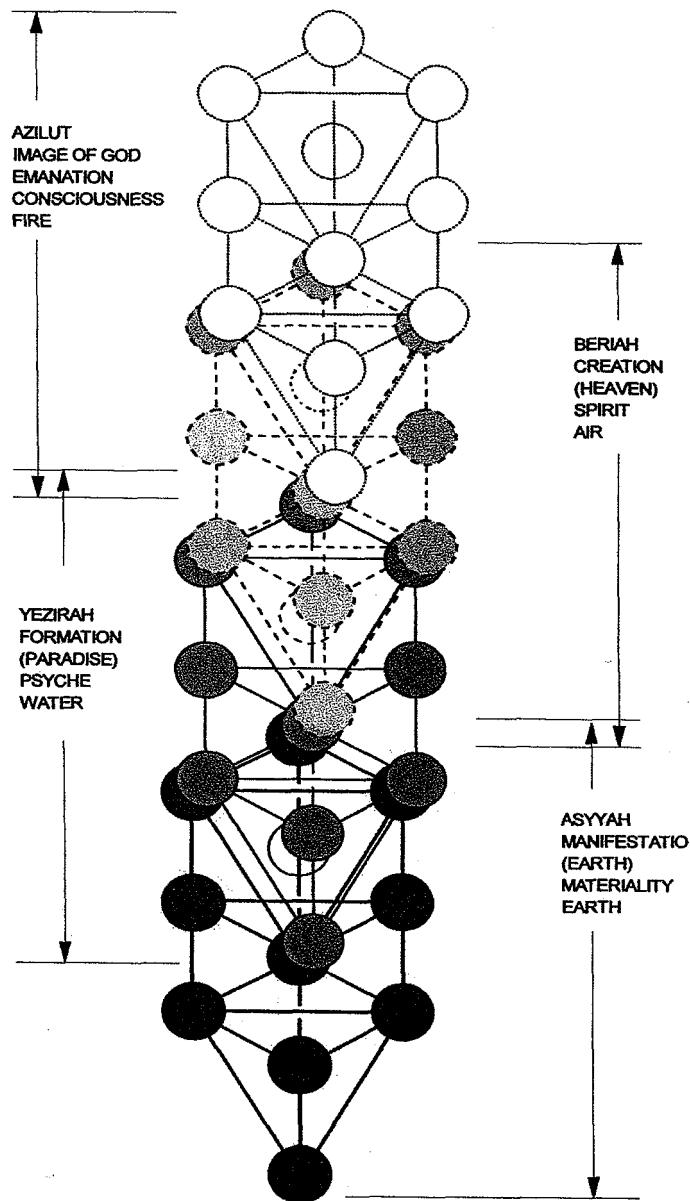


Figure 23. The Divine Persona at the Yesod of Azilut.

but from his own *experience*—the truth of the Biblical sayings:

"The Lord is in His Holy Temple ..." and "... ye are the Temple."

If you know this, you know enough.

*Editor's Note: This paper was originally presented at a conference on the subject of Kabbalah and Its Influence on the English Mystical Tradition held at the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford in May 1999. The article deals specifically with English Masonry, and it provides an opportunity to appreciate the local differences in Masonic practice. It was presented with the cognizance of the United Grand Lodge of England.*

## NOTES

1. Emulation Working, First Lecture, First Section.
2. Francis A. Yates, *The Rosicrucian Enlightenment* (London: Ark, 1986), p. 209.
3. Francis A. Yates, *The Art of Memory* (London: Ark, 1984) p. 304.
4. Albert G. Mackey, *The History of Freemasonry* (New York: Random House, 1996), p. 163.
5. Francis A. Yates, *The Occult Philosophy in the Elizabethian Age* (London: RKP, 1979), pp. 1-6.
6. Michael Baigent, "Freemasonry, Hermetic Thought and the Royal Society of London," *Ars Quatuor Coronatorum*, vol. 109.
7. Elias Ashmole, *Theatrum Chemicum Britannicum* (London, 1652), p. 443 (italics in original).
8. In much contemporary usage "magic" has come to apply the latter process of manipulating the physical world.
9. H.C. Agrippa, trans. J. Freake, ed. Donald Tyson, *Three Books of Occult Philosophy*; (St. Paul, Minn.: Llewellyn, 1993), Appendix VII, p. 76.
10. Lugh, *Old George Pickingill and the Roots of Modern Witchcraft* (London: Wiccan Publications, 1982) pp. from Taray ed., 1984.
11. Bernard E. Jones, *Freemasons' Guide and Compendium* (Orpington: Dobby, 1994), p. 180.
12. J. Hancox, *The Byrom Collection* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1992), p. 174.

13. D. Knoop, G.P. Jones, G.P., and D. Hamer, *Early Masonic Catechisms* (London: Quatuor Coronati Lodge No. 2076, 1975), pp. 97-8.
14. Yates, *The Rosicrucian Enlightenment* p. 44.
15. Anon., *The Book M* (Newcastle upon Tyne, 1736), p. 23 (italics in the original).
16. Knoop et al., pp. 170-1.
17. In fact, the Three Degree system may have been in place, in some form, as early as 1723. *Post-Boy*, Dec 28, 1723; in Scottish Rite Research Society; *The Plumpline*; Winter 1999; vol 7, no. 2.
18. Knoop et al., pp. 210-25.
19. Harry Carr, ed., *The Early French Exposures (1737-1751)* (Kila, Mont.: Kessinger, n.d.), pp. 316-375.
20. John Hamill, *The Craft* (London: Crucible, 1986). p. 50.
21. Hamill, p. 102.
22. Colin Dyer, *Symbolism in Craft Freemasonry* (Shepperton: Lewis, 1983), p. 137.
23. S. Jones quoted by Colin Dyer, *William Preston and His Work* (Shepperton: Lewis, 1987), p. 15.
24. Percy James in *Ars Quatuor Coronatorum*, vol. 83; quoted by Colin Dyer, *William Preston*, p. 143.
25. Dyer, *William Preston*, p. 1.
26. Dyer, *William Preston*, pp. 98-9.
27. Hamill, p. 54.
28. T.J. Pettigrew, *Bibliotheca Sussexiana* (London, 1827), Index to the Manuscripts.
29. Royal Arch Ritual, Dometric Working.
30. L. Dermott, *Ahiman Rezon* (London: Black, 1764), p. i.
31. L. Dermott, p. xiii.
32. T. Harper, *Ahiman Rezon* (London: Harper, 1807).
33. T. Harper.
34. T. Harper.
35. B.E. Jones, pp. 281-2.
36. It is only fair to say that Brother B.E. Jones would be most surprised to find his work used to support a paper relating Freemasonry to Kabbalah. Throughout his book

he discounts the idea of Kabbalistic influence (e.g. B.E. Jones, p. 122). In dealing with Kabbalah, Jones refers to the Rev. Dr. Hook, a Christian authority; and he seems to understand Kabbalah in terms of gematria. I agree that Masonic symbolism is not accessible with that working method, but there is much more to Kabbalah than gematria. I think that if the working method on which this presentation is based had been available to Jones, he would be more receptive to these ideas than his book suggests.

37. The Tracing Boards in this presentation were prepared by John Harris, an illustrator and miniaturist, in the 1820s.

38. *Hermetica*, W. Scott trans. (Boston: Shambhala, 1993), LIBELLVS IX, p. 185.

39. *Hermetica, The Emerald Tablet*.

40. J. Reuchlin, *De Arte Cabalistica* (1517; reprint, Lincoln, Neb.: Univ. Nebraska Press, 1993) > Book Two, for example.

41. Dyer, *Symbolism*, p. 113.

42. Dyer, *William Preston*, p. 72.

43. This word is chosen carefully. They conceived of the Universe as a highly integrated unity; they perceived it (as incarnate humans do) as having this hierarchical structure.

44. *Hermetica*, Stobaeus, Excerpt XXIV, p. 495.

45. Readers who are not familiar with the workings of the Tree of Life as they are taught in the Toledano School can refer to the Appendix for an overview.

46. Dyer, *Symbolism*, pp. 107-8.

47. Dyer, *Symbolism*, pp. 94-5.

48. R. Fludd, *Utriusque Cosmi, Historia* (Oppenheim: De Bry, 1617-9).

49. Emulation Working, First Lecture, Fourth Section.

50. Emulation Working, Second Lecture, Second Section.

51. J. Reuchlin, *De Arte Cabalistica*, Book Three, p. 277. The ascent described by Reuchlin is achieved by means of contemplation of the Divine Name and Seventy Two verses selected from the Psalms.

52. *Hermetica*, LIBELLVS I, p. 129 is an example of a seven level ascent in an astrological idiom.

53. Frances A. Yates, *The Occult Philosophy*, p. 63.

54. B.E. Jones, p. 467; see also Hamill, pp. 68-76.

55. Dyer, *Symbolism*, pp. 153-61.

56. Emulation Working, Opening, First Degree.
57. Emulation Working, First Lecture, Sixth Section.
58. Dyer, *Symbolism*, p. 91.
59. Dyer, *Symbolism*, pp.131-6; see also Second Lecture, Fifth Section, Emulation Working.
60. Explanation of the Second Degree Tracing Board, Emulation Working.
61. Explanation of the Second Degree Tracing Board, Emulation Working.
62. Explanation of the Second Degree Tracing Board, Emulation Working.
63. Emulation Working; First Lecture, Fifth Section.
64. Dyer, *Symbolism*, pp. 84-90.
65. Emulation Working; Second Lecture, Second Section.
66. K.C.W. Guthrie; *History of Greek Philosophy*; vol I (Cambridge, 1971).
67. Dyer; *Symbolism*, p. 167.
68. B.E. Jones, p. 300.
69. Dyer, *Symbolism*, p.171.
70. Emulation Working; Third Degree.
71. B.E. Jones, pp. 303-22; see also William Preston, *The Syllabus Books*, in Dyer, *William Preston*, pp. 260-81.
72. W.L. Wilmshurst, quoted in Dyer, *Symbolism*, pp. 138-9.
73. Carr, pp. 316-75.
74. Z. ben S. Halevi, *A Kabbalistic Universe* (London: Rider, 1977) p. 120.
75. Hamill, p. 99.
76. *Complete Workings of the Royal Arch Degree* (Shepperton: Lewis Masonic, 1990), p.115.